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'Why can Love neither be bought nor sold? | All other goods by Fortune's hand are given;
Because its only price is Love. | A Wife is the peculiar gift of Heaven.'—POPE.

'What constitutes National Prosperity? Not wealth or commerce simply, or military achievements, but the greatest possible number of **HEALTHY, HAPPY, and GRACEFUL HOMES**, where the purest flame burns brightest on the altar of family love, and woman, with her piety, forbearance, and kindness of love, is permitted to officiate as high priestess.'

RICHES, TITLES, HONOUR, POWER, AND WORLDLY PROSPECTS ARE AS NOUGHT TO A DEEPLY-ROOTED LOVE!

'In every being throughout animated Nature, from the most insignificant insect to the most enlightened, ennobled, and highly-developed being, we notice a deeply-rooted love for one possession before all others, and that is the possession of Life. What will not man give to preserve his life? The value of riches, titles, honour, power, and worldly prospects are as nought compared with the value which the same man, however humble, and even miserable, places on the preservation of his life.'



A SONG OF GRATITUDE.

By the late S. C. HALL, F.S.A., who
was over eighty years of age when
he wrote the following:—

These words a wise Physician said:—
'STOMACH'S a master all should dread,
Oppose his laws—for Death prepare!
Obey them—Health will triumph there!
With grateful thanks I hail thy name,
ENO!—and strive to give it fame.
Your SALT OF FRUIT can bring me ease,
And give me comfort when I please;
By true aperient, strong or mild,
To calm a man, or soothe a child;
Aid Nature without force or strain;
Strengthen heart, liver, lung, and brain;
Make the pulse neither fast nor slow,
The blood—heat not too high nor low,
So bringing health at little cost,
Restoring what neglect had lost!
To ENO'S SALT I owe a debt
The grateful mind may not forget;
With rhyme that debt in part I pay,
Experience teaches what to say.

What nobler aim can man attain, than conquest over human pain?

For Health and Longevity, use ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT.'

SUGAR, CHEMICALLY-COLOURED SHERBET, STIMULANTS.—

Experience shows that Sugar, Chemically-Coloured Sherbet, Mild Ale, Port Wine, Dark Sherries, Sweet Champagne, Liqueurs, and Brandy, are all very apt to disagree, while Light Wines, and Gin or old Whisky largely diluted with Soda Water, will be found the least objectionable. ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' is particularly adapted for any constitutional weakness of the liver. It possesses the power of reparation where digestion has been disturbed or lost, and places the invalid on the right track to health. ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' should be kept in every bedroom and travelling trunk for any emergency; always useful, can never do any harm.

The value of ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' cannot be told. Its success in Europe, Asia, Africa, America, Australia, and New Zealand, proves it.

No Man is bound to be Rich, Great, or Wise, but every Man is bound to be Honest.

THE SECRET OF SUCCESS.—Sterling Honesty of Purpose; without it, Life is a Sham!—A new invention is brought before the public, and commands success. A score of abominable imitations are immediately introduced by the unscrupulous, who, in copying the original closely enough to deceive the public, and yet not so exactly as to infringe upon legal rights, exercise an ingenuity that, employed in an original channel, could not fail to secure reputation and profit.—ADAMS.

CAUTION.—Examine each Bottle, and see that the Capsule is marked **ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT.'** Without it, you have been imposed upon by a worthless imitation.

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LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

MARCH 1890.

Virginie.

A TALE OF ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

BY VAL PRINSEP, ASSOCIATE OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

CHAPTER XII.

THE WIDENING RIFT.

VIRGINIE'S mind was much troubled. During the whole of the eleven years she had been at the convent she had never done anything for which she could reproach herself. She had, it is true, had her little passage of love; but then, in that affair, she was confident she had acted uprightly and well, so that no one could have blamed her for what she had done. But now she felt she had been guilty of carrying on a correspondence which she had reason to think was in direct opposition to her father's wishes, and the thought of the wrong she had done was very distressing to her. The whole of her conduct now appeared to her in a different light. Did she love this man? and, loving him, was she committing a sin? How was she, a young girl of eighteen, to judge the matter? Ought she not to take counsel with her father, who was her natural guardian till she was old enough to judge for herself?

For hours she turned over these questions in her mind. Had she not already been treated with suspicion by Jacques, she would at once have gone to him and confessed everything. But

two days of unexpressed indignation had greatly embittered her. How could she lay her heart bare before this father who had accused her of such terrible things? How could she hope he would understand her? Yet he *was* her father, and to him she owed every obedience. The more she considered her position, the more distasteful seemed the confession she had to make. Then she remembered the good Father Berulle, her confessor, had warned her against the one fault he had detected in her—pride, or self-confidence.

‘Remember, my child,’ he had said, ‘in many matters you cannot be a fitting judge. Humble yourself before Heaven, and seek guidance in those who are put in authority over you.’

Ah! had the Abbé Berulle been there to consult! But her father! She thought and thought till her head fairly reeled. ‘Pride,’ her conscience seemed to say to her, ‘it is thy pride stands in the way;’ and straightway there came back to her mind what her father had done for her, and her heart softened towards him. She would tell him all. She would humble herself—she would sacrifice her pride. Full of these good intentions, down she went to the great kitchen, where she found Jacques superintending a general turn-out.

‘What, Virginie!’ he cried, hot and busy, ‘come not in now. See, everything is in filth and disorder. Imbecile that thou art, Pierre! Wilt thou never learn? What art thou at, Louis? Thou wilt drop those pans, lout that thou art!’

Louis, whether from nervousness or natural awkwardness, lost the balance of the pile of saucepans, which fell with a mighty clatter on the floor.

Jacques fairly shrieked in his rage. Forgetting the presence of his daughter, he heaped a torrent of abuse on the head of the unfortunate Louis that quite frightened the girl, who turned and fled to escape the sound.

In her room she again had a fit of indecision. How was she to tell? How could she face this violence? ‘Impossible,’ whispered her pride. Conscience, however, urged her to confide, and she determined to tell all that evening, when she knew he would be ready to listen to her. What matter if Rousselet were there? It was well he too should know the truth. She did not fear him—nay, she felt she had a certain power over this grim man, who seemed to her to gaze at her with respect and admiration.

When the time came, full of inward tremor but outwardly

calm, she took her work and joined the two friends at their evening gossip.

Rousselet had passed the Comte and his cousin in the main street of Sèvres. He had taken upon himself to warn Jacques against these aristocrats, and, although the honest *aubergist* had defended his patrons, his suspicions had been roused, and he was unquiet on account of this visit. His temper, like a volcano, was ready to burst forth, and he was nervous and excited.

But Rousselet had other news to impart. On the day before, June 20, there had taken place the celebrated swearing of the newly-styled National Assembly in the tennis-court of the Rue St. François at Versailles. Great was the excitement of all true patriots at the intrigues of the Court and nobility, and mighty was the enthusiasm raised by the heroic conduct of the popular Representatives. It was while Rousselet was holding forth on this topic that Virginie entered. She was, of course, ignorant of the previous conversation, and, being unaccustomed to read her father's humours by the expression of his face, and being, indeed, much occupied by her own affairs, was unhappily quite unaware of the volcanic state of his mind.

'These aristocrats' (Rousselet suppressed the oath on seeing Virginie enter the room), 'who are ever trying to drain our life's blood, would have stopped the meeting of the Representatives of the People. They meanly endeavoured to shut the door of the Salle des Menus, where the Assembly was wont to meet; but the President, M. Bailly, adjourned to the tennis-court, and there the whole House, under the leadership of the glorious Mirabeau, swore to be true to each other and to the people they represented.'

'What can you expect of the *scélérats* who break into our houses and think themselves above the law?' replied Jacques, looking sternly at Virginie while he spoke. She, alas! was still too anxious as to how she ought to begin her own confession to observe her father's excitement.

The two then began a fierce abuse of the *noblesse*. Jacques was even more violent than Rousselet, he being free from those restraining influences that caused his friend to soften his words in the presence of Virginie. That young lady listened in astonishment. She had not been present at her father's evening gossip since the fatal day of the St. Aubray scandal, from which time his ideas had been completely altered. All his old theories had been blown to the winds. Now he was fiercer than Rousselet in his

denunciations—one little moment seemed to have changed his being.

‘But, father,’ gently remarked Virginie, after having listened to this abuse some time, ‘they are not all bad, these aristocrats.’

‘All! all!’ cried Jacques, striking the table with his fist.

‘The two gentlemen who were here to-day, M. de la Beauce—’ she said.

‘Listen to the girl!’ cried Jacques, interrupting. ‘How knewest thou there were two gentlemen here to-day? Thou wert spying from that window of thine. Ever art thou on the watch. M. de la Beauce! how camest thou to know his name? Tell me this minute!’

‘Father!’ said Virginie, startled at his violence. ‘M. de la Beauce——’ she unfortunately began—the name being uppermost in her mind—

‘Silence!’ roared Jacques. ‘I’ll have nothing of M. de la Beauce! Is he not the cousin of the other? They are all alike: civil spoken when it pleases them, but ever lying in wait to trample on the *bourgeoisie*, to ruin our daughters, and do us to death. Never let daughter of mine mention them—a heartless, mean, despicable crew—who—who——’ and here his utterance failed him. He was terrible to see; even Rousselet was surprised at his violence, and Virginie could hardly believe her eyes. But the very anger tended to cool her. She was not deficient in courage. She rose and gathered up her work.

‘Father,’ she said, ‘I do not understand you. That there are wicked men among these courtiers, as there are among all classes, there is no doubt. You have no right to speak of them in this fashion. M. de la Beauce——’

Here Jacques interrupted her with a yell of wrath.

‘M. de la Beauce! M. de la Beauce!’ he shrieked. ‘Always M. de la Beauce. Out on thee! Is it for this that I have loved thee these years? M. de la Beauce is it? and who to-morrow? and what can he be to thee but lover?’

Virginie stood pale and dignified before him. She made one more attempt at protest.

‘The man you will not have me mention is an honest man.’

But Jacques would not hear a word.

‘Out,’ he cried, ‘to your room, shameless girl! to your room!’ and he pointed to the door with a terrible gesture.

Virginie said no more, but, with slow and stately sweep, passed

to the door. At the door she turned to speak, but her father waved her away with menacing hand, and she, bowing with queenly serenity, left the room.

'Heard'st thou anything like that?' cried Jacques to his friend. 'The girl is bewitched. Ah! why did I ever let her out of my sight?' and the poor man burst into tears.

Rousselet was inwardly glad at the course things had taken. He had watched Virginie keenly during this scene. He saw there was more in her attempt to speak than her father supposed, and he was glad Jacques' violence had stopped any foolish fancies in her mind. He really formed a very wrong opinion of Virginie's character. He had but little experience of women, and those whom he had come across were as different from this girl as he, with his stern self-contained nature, was from the excitable and really vacillating Jacques. He thought Virginie would yield a ready obedience to her father, knowing that such obedience was what was inculcated as a duty by the female education of the France of that time, as it is to this day. Yet, now that he thought his object had been gained, now that Jacques had shown unmistakably to his daughter his dislike of this young man, Rousselet tried all he could to calm the agitation of his friend; and, thinking that matters might perhaps go too far, even hinted that Jacques might be deceived, and that he had been somewhat harsh in his language.

'Thinkest thou I do not love her?' said Jacques through his tears. 'Thou knowest not how I have doated on my daughter all these years. Am I to have this treasure taken from me by one of these vile seducers? Am I to be shamed through her whom I have brought up to be my idol? Ah, my lost wife,' he sobbed, 'couldst thou see me now!' And the poor man leant his head on his arm and literally blubbered.

'My friend,' said Rousselet, 'we will watch over this thy treasure together. She is good and affectionate, and will listen to her father.' He took the father's hand, he felt he was pleading for himself. 'No man shall come near her, be he ever so much of an aristocrat. Am I not by thy side?' Rousselet was a little man, but in the strength of his affection he felt a giant. Jacques shook his friend's hand.

'Thanks, my friend,' he said, 'thou art ever true. Do I not know this Comte de la Beauce? He is the cousin of the Marquis de Boisse, in whose house I met her that has gone. How would they have treated her had she not been an angel of

virtue? I know them well; Boisseac or La Beauce, what difference is there?’

Much more conversation the two friends had, in which Rousselet endeavoured to persuade Jacques that it would be well to treat Virginie with more kindness. He had remarked her indignation on leaving the room, and his instinct told him it would not be well to excite her opposition. It was late when the two parted. As Jacques let his friend out and shook his hand, he said, ‘I cannot think thee in the right. I have done nothing but my duty.’

When he returned to the solitary room he sat some time in deep thought. Was this his Virginie, the daughter of that Virginie who had been so true a wife to him? He remembered the pride with which he had watched her growing to womanhood, the love he had for her, which had caused him to sacrifice everything to have her educated beyond her station; even the fears which had haunted him when he realised how beautiful she was growing. Was she really to be stolen from him? Poor man! He looked on her as an inestimable treasure confided to his care by his wife—a treasure that must be kept from contamination at all costs. Like a good watchdog, he was for flying at any one who approached, forgetting that perhaps his furious barkings might terrify not only trespassers, but the very person for whose safety he raged. He who loved Virginie, who idolised her, could not suppose he could terrify her, still less could he conceive that she could be wounded by what he said. As he sat there that night, thinking of the past, no word of his struck him as being unjust or cruel. He had but rebuked her for her foolish conduct. Yet Rousselet, whose judgment he knew to be good, had hinted that he had been harsh to his girl. Was this possible? He had said no more to her than he had said to every one about the place. But if it were so! His tender heart was wounded at the very idea. He sighed to himself when he thought that perhaps this young girl required a mother’s care; that he was too coarse and common for such a charge. What would his poor wife have thought had she seen him storming at her child? Then he called to mind the scene with the Marquise when he had gained his own wife. He grew pale with the idea that he had perhaps acted towards his daughter as the proud lady had acted towards her that was no more, and suddenly he became full of repentance. His girl should not think hard of him. He would go to her room quietly, and see whether his anger had had any evil consequences.

The house was quiet, every one having retired to bed. As he rose from his chair his heavy tread made the boards creak, at which he was alarmed. He did not wish to be heard, so he drew off his shoes, and in his stockinged feet crept up the stairs, like a thief, blushing at the noise that even then the jealous boards would give forth. When he came to the door of his daughter's room he listened intently; there was no sound, nor did he see any light. She must be asleep, he thought, at which he gave a sigh of relief, and with the same stealthy tread retired to his own room on the lower floor.

Ah! had he but entered the room, and had an explanation with his daughter; had he at any time taken her to his heart and said, 'Daughter, I am but a rough fellow, my love for thee makes me afraid,' much evil might have been avoided. But, no! He was convinced that his first idea was the correct one. Rousselet was wrong. He had not been too severe. Virginie quite understood. So, when he laid himself down to sleep, not a doubt entered his mind; and as he slept he was troubled with dreams of dangers from without, and never imagined that the great irreparable wrong had been wrought by himself!

CHAPTER XIII.

VIRGINIE MAKES UP HER MIND.

VIRGINIE was not asleep. On regaining her room her overwrought nerves entirely gave way, and she burst into tears. She had been unused to such scenes. In the calm of the convent, where she had spent so many years of her life, no such violence was possible. Her father's conduct repelled her. To him it was a common occurrence. When anything went wrong he was wont to lose his temper, and under such circumstances, like most passionate men, he did not measure his language. Not being new to him, he thought it a light thing so to speak to his daughter. But she felt it acutely. For the moment she almost determined to leave the house—to go anywhere away from such injustice. Perhaps they would receive her back into the convent, where she could teach the smaller children. Wearily she went to bed, but not to sleep. She thought of the difference of this *bourgeois* father and the courtly La Beauce. Was it possible that her duty obliged her to pass her life amidst such scenes? She even doubted the love of

her father. She could not understand love associated with contumely and abuse. Lying awake in bed, she pictured to herself the Château de la Beauce, the good she might do, the calm of her life, and then she contrasted it with what she had gone through. She heard her father's step on the stair. It frightened her to think that it might be some robber. The step stopped at her door. Some one was listening; she held her breath in alarm. She heard a sigh, and then the steps withdrew and grew fainter and fainter. She came to the conclusion it was her father; but, instead of putting his solicitude down to the real cause, she attributed it to jealous suspicion, and was the more indignant. What, did he think she would have fled already? Did he really imagine her to be a heartless coquette, a low flighty trifler, who ogled men from her window, and encouraged passers-by to hope for her worthless favours? She choked with the thought. She felt the blood rising to her head, and leaped from her bed. And this was the love for which she sacrificed the noble heart of La Beauce! She looked from her open window—for it was in June, and the weather was hot—out into the mellow night. She allowed herself to think of the Comte without restraint. What was he doing? Could he imagine she was so miserable? She stretched her weary arms into the soft darkness as though he were there. For the first time she abandoned herself to her love. Right or wrong, she loved him, would always love him. She would sacrifice everything for him—name—character—father—all she had, and she was comforted with the idea. She felt no compunction now. The sacrifice should not be all on his side. She would give up everything and fly with him, and as she crept back to her bed, she determined to write the next day and tell him so. So, before the whirlwind of her passionate love, the idea of convent life was wafted away, swept along with all the duties she used to cherish. Wearied out, she sank to rest as the dawn began to show itself over the distant city of Paris.

Virginie was late the next day. She was quite worn out, and sent down to her father to say she had a headache, and would stay in her room. After the *déjeuner* at eleven o'clock, which she had sent to her room, Jacques paid her a visit. He was radiant with smiles.

'*Bon jour, ma fille!*' he cried, and kissed her; 'thou art suffering. Rest thyself.'

He was hot and red, and made no excuse for his overnight

conduct. It seemed to her he treated her as he would a favourite dog, to be abused and sworn at and afterwards petted—a dog who was expected to wag his tail and cringe and fawn, whatever happened. She was offended and hurt, and as soon as he had gone, and he only stayed a minute, she sat down to write to La Beauce. Her heart flowed out to him now in one headlong torrent. The walls that bound the reservoir were burst indeed, washed away and destroyed, and she felt the happier. Here was one whom she could worship, who was worthy of her and would understand her. Let her leave everything for him. The die was cast.

‘*Mon ami,*’ she wrote, ‘when I wrote to you yesterday I was impelled to do so by the joy of seeing you again. I had hoped when I left Chartres to have been able to forget the love for you which I felt it was not wise in me to cherish. I thought that my duty to my father would suffice for me. Alas! how can one forget? However much I strove to do so, my thoughts would wander back to those pleasant days we spent together at the Hermitage. I seemed to hear your voice calling me to return as when I last heard it; I seemed to see your face pale and agitated, as I saw it last in the Church of the Visitation; and your eager searching eyes, as I remember them then, seemed to haunt me. Yet though I broke my promise to myself in acknowledging your letter, if I had answered that day I should have given the same answer I thought it my duty to make last autumn. Now things have changed. I cannot tell you how—I may later on. Will you despise me for changing my mind? Ah, you will rather, when you learn the reason, pity me. I feel weak and miserable. I am afraid I am doing what may lead to unhappiness to us both. But I must yield to my love or go mad. In your great heart you will forgive me. You say you love, and I am only too willing to believe you. Loving me you will understand how difficult it has been for me to fight against myself, and, now that I find it impossible, with what joy I look forward to seeing you again, never to be parted from you. Ah! come and take me away. Let me feel there is some one whose love is true, some one who can trust me. Here I live in an atmosphere of doubt and mistrust. Take me from it quickly. Louison’s cousin takes this; send an answer by him, or, if that is impossible, to-morrow Louison will be at the place she met you yesterday, at about ten, which is the time my father is most occupied. He must know nothing, as he is most violent.

‘VIRGINIE.’

Having finished this, it is to be feared, very foolish epistle she called Louison. She then brought out her scanty store of money, and producing a few francs—'Louison,' she said, 'I have heard thee speak of a cousin of thine in the town of Sèvres, who was a trusty lad. Give him these pieces and bid him take this letter to Versailles to the Comte de la Beauce at this address as soon as possible.'

'Ah, mademoiselle,' cried Louison, 'there is a good gentleman! and how he loves mademoiselle! Why, when I mentioned you the tears came to his eyes!'

'Take the letter, my good child,' said Virginie, gratefully.

'Why, of course, Louis shall carry the letter;' and she took it, and turned it over in her hand, with the delight an illiterate person has in such superior knowledge, and perhaps a trifle of curiosity to know the contents. Virginie tendered the money.

'What is all that for? Ten francs to go to Versailles! The idea! Louis will run there and back for one. Keep your money, my good mademoiselle, I take one'—and depositing the letter in the depth of the well-known pocket she left the room.

It was done then—she was quite calm and happy. All she was anxious about now was how to get out of the house without being seen. She had noticed her father was very much occupied in the mornings before the hour of *déjeuner*, she had therefore mentioned the hour of ten to La Beauce. She generally walked in the garden about that time, and if she could only get out by the garden door, she could easily join him and fly. This door she had never had the curiosity to open. Was it locked? If so, how could she get the key? She knew the old man employed as gardener came in by this door in the early morning, and by it too was introduced all the dressing, &c., necessary for the beds of flowers and vegetables. Involuntarily she put on her hat and threw her shawl around her shoulders. Down the stairs she tripped and into the great kitchen, where she found her father hot and busy as usual.

'*Tiens*, Virginie, is it thou? Goest thou to take the air in the garden? It is well,' he cried. Then he shouted, 'Pierre, thou sacred pig, what meanest thou by this? Have I not shown thee a thousand times how to make this sauce? Callest thou this mixed, thou dirty rascalion? Thy sacred laziness will bring thee to a bad end,' and on ran his tongue its usual mad career. He had forgotten Virginie and his troubles for a time.

Virginie passed through to the garden. What a calm was

there! The midday sun shone brightly, making the glossy leaves sparkle in its light, and lending additional brilliancy to the many variegated colours of the flowers; for everything was in its glory. She loved these flowers, they had no reproaches for her. The snowy white balls of the Gueldres roses bowed across the path. The quaint bunches of larkspur shot up from the beds of stocks, amid carnations and graceful lilies which, with the sweet seringa, scented the air. She stooped over a great bush of roses, and, as she buried her head in a splendid full-blown bloom, she drank in its delicious perfume. 'Ah,' she thought, 'before thou art withered I shall see my love;' but, as she daintily stirred the petals, some of the leaves already overblown fell to the ground and lay there like great clots of crimson blood. She was almost frightened when she saw them. Was it an omen? Carefully she gathered them up and, looking round lest she should be watched, placed them in her bosom with the letter she had received from La Beauce.

'They shall not die for nothing,' she thought; 'should it be a bad omen, should I bring ill-fortune to my love, I shall be there to share it, and at least if necessary I can sacrifice my life's blood for him.'

She thought nothing of herself, nothing of her father; already everything with her was La Beauce—La Beauce and her new-found love!

At the other end of the garden was the gardener engaged in hoeing a bed of vegetables. Slowly she wandered in his direction, stopping now to adjust a fallen spray, now to examine a tender bud or shoot. She did not wish to show the least anxiety or haste. When she had reached the bed at which the man worked she paused and watched him for a moment or two, then she said—

'I hope you always lock the door of the garden when you leave your work, Gabet?'

The man stayed his hand, looking up. Slowly he straightened his bent back, then lifted his hat, and wiped his wrinkled brow with an embarrassed air.

'Why, no, mademoiselle,' he said hesitatingly; 'to say the truth I have lost the key. Do not tell Maitre le Blanc,' he added in a pleading tone. 'I must have mislaid it, and will find it some day. Monsieur will be very angry, mademoiselle.'

'It makes no difference,' said Virginie kindly, inwardly rejoiced at this stroke of luck. 'Shut the door and every one will think it is locked.'

'Have no fear, mademoiselle. The door sticks and requires a good pull to open it. It is easier to open it from the inside than the out,' observed the man, half speaking to himself.

Virginie hastened back to the house overjoyed. Her mind was quite made up now. She longed to be away from the Couronne d'Or to be with La Beauce. The satisfaction of feeling she was sacrificing herself for the man she loved was very dear to her generous nature, which had recoiled from the idea that the sacrifice was all on his side. Brought up with the strict notions of the convent she knew that she was doing something that was contrary to all the ideas of decorum and respectability. She had perfect confidence in the Comte, she knew she could trust to his honour. She would belong entirely to the man of her choice, the rest of the world was nothing to her. In the flood of affection which filled her soul there was no place for any one but La Beauce. Father, reputation, life itself, she would have sacrificed them all to this man. She thought but little of her father, and, if she did, she brought herself to believe that, by ridding the Couronne d'Or of her presence, she was doing him a real service in relieving him of a care that evidently weighed heavily on his mind. She, in her ignorance of the world, no more understood him than he could appreciate her sensitive nature, so greatly had these two grown to misunderstand each other. She, absorbed in her love for La Beauce, became blind to her father's affection, while Jacques failed to perceive the pain and feverish resentment his distrust and irritability caused Virginie. His nature, though full of affectionate tendencies, was coarsened by its contact with people of tougher sensibilities, to whom a rough word was only an emphasised mode of expressing a passing displeasure. How could he tell the effect it would have on so sensitive a nature as Virginie's?

So the afternoon passed. The evening meal Virginie again ate alone in her room, pleading illness. Jacques thought nothing wrong, and, it being a busy time, did not even pay her a visit, on receiving an assurance from Louison that Mademoiselle would soon be all right. That smiling Abigail slipped out in the evening, and returned with a short note from La Beauce expressing his joy at receiving Virginie's letter. He said he was quite prepared to ask M. le Blanc for his daughter's hand, but as Virginie seemed to dread the answer her father would give he was willing to abide by her wishes, that he would be punctually at the spot indicated with a carriage and swift horses. He added a few words of affection, that warmed the heart of the poor girl, to whom all delay

and uncertainty was most chilling. She then unfolded La Beauce's plans to Louison. Readily the maid agreed to perform her part, but only on condition that she should share her mistress's fortunes. She really loved her with a dog-like fidelity, and was so loud in her protestations against being left in Sèvres after her mistress's departure that Virginie was obliged to agree to take her. The two then laid their heads together, and settled that Louison was to go to meet La Beauce, and that he was to pass through the town and wait with his carriage at the bridge at the Paris end of the long straggling street. Virginie was to sally out by the garden gate, which opened into a small back lane leading in the direction of the bridge, where she was to join the carriage, and start in it for Paris.

That night Virginie wrote a letter to her father, to be left behind after her flight.

CHAPTER XIV.

A VISIT TO VERSAILLES.

ROUSSELET meanwhile had been uneasy. He had much more penetration than Jacques; besides, he was in love, and that gave him an instinctive feeling that there was something more in this familiarity with the name of M. de la Beauce than the father believed. Perhaps he felt that this was his rival. Could Virginie have met this man at Chartres? and if she had met him, what wonder if she had admired him? The poor fellow could not help contrasting his personal appearance with that of his hated rival.

Rousselet was small. His face had the sort of stern beauty that comes from great individuality; but it had none of the charm necessary to captivate a woman's fancy. He was not a 'lady's man.' He had devoted himself to his art and to politics, or rather to the study of those philosophical problems which in the last days of the French monarchy had to supply the want of more active political life. He could not but perceive that La Beauce was eminently handsome; that his figure was tall, straight, and well knit; that he had all the bearing of a gentleman, and the polished, well-bred grace common to the French *noblesse*—in fact, that he had all the advantages that he, Rousselet, lacked. He was tortured with the idea that such a one might well form

the *beau idéal* of a woman's fancy. He would save Virginie from falling into the hands of this man. Marriage never entered his head. He could not imagine one of this hated class stooping to ally himself with a plebeian. He knew that this comte belonged to an ancient and very noble family. He was only too well aware of the prejudices of the *noblesse*, and was well versed in the many scandalous histories of the ruin they had too often worked in the families of the *bourgeoisie*. All the night, after the scene between Jacques and Virginie, he pondered on some means of preventing the catastrophe he felt was impending, and he determined on going to Versailles and seeking an interview with La Beauce, to warn him that his plans were discovered and that he would prevent them. Foolish man! he was blinded by love.

Versailles is but a few miles from Sèvres. Rousselet well knew the way. He had often gone over to collect the political gossip of head-quarters. He went over there in the afternoon of the day Virginie had written her fatal letter. By inquiring adroitly he quickly found the address of the Comte de la Beauce and presented himself at his lodgings. 'Monsieur le Comte is at home,' said the smart lacquey; 'I will see whether Monsieur will receive the Sieur Rousselet.' He was kept waiting but a short time, and was finally ushered into a well-furnished apartment where La Beauce was sitting writing. Rousselet stood by the door, uneasy, notwithstanding his determination, and hesitating how he was to begin. The Comte turned round: 'You would see me?' he asked; 'what is it you desire to say?' There was no rudeness in his question, but the slight tone of condescension, natural from a superior to an inferior, grated on Rousselet's republican nerves.

'Monsieur,' began Rousselet, 'I come from Sèvres.'

La Beauce, who had already received Virginie's letter, glanced quickly at him. Who was this man? Did he come from Virginie? Had she changed her mind again? Luckily Rousselet had not the smiling face of a messenger, and La Beauce was put on his guard by his grave, even sullen look. He might otherwise have betrayed himself—as it was he asked quietly—

'From Sèvres? And what is it you want? Do you come from my friend M. le Blanc?'

Rousselet, too, had noted the quick glance of surprise. It strengthened his opinion that this La Beauce knew Virginie.

'Monsieur,' said he, 'I do not come directly from my friend

M. le Blanc, but it is on his business I am here.' There was a pause. He did not know how to begin.

La Beauce smiled. 'I await your pleasure, monsieur.'

'Tis this,' continued Rousselet. 'Last night I was with Jacques le Blanc and his daughter, when she mentioned your name.'

'And what did she say?' asked the Comte.

'Not much, but by her manner I saw that she would have said more had not her father impetuously interrupted her.'

'Well!' asked La Beauce as Rousselet paused.

'And I come here, Monsieur le Comte, to appeal to you.'

'I do not see on whose authority you come, monsieur,' said La Beauce, now quite on his guard, 'nor exactly what you wish to ascertain. Mademoiselle le Blanc seems to have mentioned my name in your presence. Is that it? Well, then, what if she did? It is not a name to be ashamed of, M. Rousselet.'

'M. le Comte,' rejoined the unhappy painter, 'Mademoiselle Virginie is not a person to mention the name of one so exalted'—his lips curled at the sarcasm—'without some cause,' and he paused again.

'Then,' said La Beauce, who imagined he had some clue to the object of this curious interview, 'had you not better apply to Mademoiselle le Blanc herself?'

'M. le Comte,' said Rousselet firmly, 'I come to you as one man comes to another, to pray you to discontinue your intercourse with this lady.'

'M. Rousselet,' said La Beauce, keeping his temper with an effort, 'I know not what reason you have to suppose that I have any acquaintance with Mademoiselle le Blanc; I know no cause you have to interfere with that acquaintance, did it exist; and I should refuse anyhow to acknowledge the right of anybody to dictate to me in any way what I ought to do or what I ought to leave undone.'

'Ah, M. le Comte, do not deny that Virginie le Blanc loves you! I know it, I feel it to be true,' cried Rousselet, overcome by his feelings. La Beauce made a gesture to interrupt him. 'No, monsieur, do not interrupt, let an honest man have his say. What can a love such as this lead to? Would you disgrace this girl? Would you ruin her? It may be a light thing for you, one of the golden *noblesse*, to do this thing. It will probably be an action of which you will brag among your fellow seducers, but you will do it at your peril,' and the little man drew himself up to his full height.

La Beauce laughed. Somehow he could feel no anger against this Rousselet. He was conscious of the honesty of his intentions, he saw passion in every word he spoke. It did not surprise him that Virginie should have found many such admirers. This one was evidently unsuccessful. His rival's simplicity in fancying he would draw forth Virginie's secret amused him.

'Again I say,' said he, 'that I do not see what you have to do with it. Jealousy, M. Rousselet,' and poor Rousselet winced—'jealousy has led you to commit a folly. Do you think if I was the man you take me for that I should be afraid of such as you?' and he laughed again. 'Go back to Sèvres, to your workshop, or wherever you came from, and learn one truth applicable to all whether noble or *bourgeois*, the excellence of the proverb, Mind your own affairs.' His hand was on the bell as he spoke.

Stung to the quick, Rousselet made a step in the direction of this laughing Adonis.

'Yes,' he said through his teeth, 'you have hit it. I do love this girl. Love her as you never could love. I will never permit any harm to come near her while I live. So beware, M. le Comte.'

'And pray what says this young lady to your love?'

'She knows it not,' cried Rousselet, sadly.

'Then,' said La Beauce with a smile, 'you should ask her to give you the right to defend her before you give yourself these airs, which'—added he, looking Rousselet well over—'seem to me a little ridiculous.'

Rousselet was himself conscious that he cut rather a poor figure, but, like many placed in similar circumstances, he was, in consequence, the more furious with the man who told him so. The Comte had rung the bell—the lacquey arrived.

'Adieu, monsieur,' said La Beauce, with a bow.

'*Au revoir*,' growled Rousselet. 'When we meet again, M. de la Beauce, the tables may be turned.'

'Till then, *sans adieu*,' laughed the Comte, and Rousselet was forced to leave. He was mad with rage. He hurried along the street without knowing where he was going, forgetting in his fury even the interest he felt in politics. He mechanically took the road home, but it was late in the night before he reached Sèvres. Where he had been he could not have told. He had wandered in the woods, what did it matter where? He cared not. Two things only he knew: that he loved Virginie and he hated this La Beauce. It was perhaps well for all that he did not present himself at the Couronne d'Or that night.

La Beauce laughed lightly when the door closed behind his visitor. It amused him to think that this curious, sardonic man was also in love with Virginie. Then he thought of the charges made against him. Did he intend to ruin this girl? She had offered herself to him. Many would not have hesitated; but La Beauce cried 'No! Shall I be less generous than she? Then would this man be the better gentleman of the two.' So he set to work to arrange all things for his departure on the next morning.

His cousin came to see him shortly after. He was anxious to know what the young man would think of the affair, so he showed him Virginie's letter. St. Aubray read it, and clapped him on the shoulder.

'So, Etienne, old fellow,' he said, 'thou art, then, out of thy dilemma.'

'What dost thou mean, François?'

'I mean no more *mésalliances*. The fortress surrenders unconditionally,' cried the young man, triumphantly.

'And thou wouldst go back from thy word?' asked his cousin.

'Thy demand of her hand was made under a false impression.'

'I have renewed it now that I am aware of the truth. No, François,' said La Beauce, gravely, 'Virginie le Blanc shall be as much the Countess de la Beauce as if she had the bluest blood in France in her veins.'

François whistled softly. He could not understand it.

CHAPTER XV.

AN EVENTFUL DAY.

THE 23rd of June was an eventful day not only for Mademoiselle Virginie le Blanc, but for all France, for on that day Louis XVI. made his last effort to control his States-General, and failed. All Versailles was in a tiptoe of expectation. Even in the morning the streets were crowded in anticipation of this royal *séance*, and multitudes came flocking into the town from Paris itself. The Comte de la Beauce, who had not set up an establishment at Versailles, and was consequently without his own carriage, had considerable difficulty in procuring horses and a carriage to keep

his appointment with Virginie; but by dint of much haranguing and some bribing at length he rolled on towards Sèvres with four good horses and a coach, and shortly after ten o'clock arrived at the appointed place, where he found the smiling Louison with directions for his guidance. By her orders the four horses, guided by two postillions in gay coats and enormous boots, clattered through the street of Sèvres. La Beauce took a glance at the Couronne d'Or as he passed. All was bustle there. Several vehicles from Paris *en route* to Versailles stood before the door; and there too was Jacques, with red excited face, smiling a welcome to some new arrivals. The carriage halted at the bridge as had been arranged. Not long had they to wait. A tall graceful figure soon appeared, coming from a by-street, accompanied by a servant. Down clattered the steps, open flew the door. La Beauce was out in a moment, and held out his hand to help Virginie to mount. She seemed hardly paler than usual, and perfectly calm. Not so Louison, whose ruddy face had lost all its colour, and who muttered in a terrified voice—

'Be quick! Mount, mademoiselle! Be quick!'

No sooner was Virginie in the carriage than the bouncing maid clambered in herself.

'Excuse me, no ceremony,' she said to the astonished La Beauce, who had not reckoned on Louison's presence, but who nevertheless quickly mounted, and seated himself by Virginie's side.

Up went the steps, the door banged to, and away sped the four horses towards Paris.

'You understand, pay no attention to me,' said Louison, with a slight chuckle.

La Beauce's arm was already round Virginie's waist. She turned her face towards his, and their lips met in a long, long kiss. It was their first.

'It's well, very well,' muttered Louison, but they paid no attention. La Beauce was supremely happy, and she happy in him. She thought nothing of her father, she cared nothing for herself. What if she did wrong in thus leaving her father's house? What if the world should despise her? Better a thousand times to be so than lead the life she had led at the Couronne d'Or, for all her being was centred in this man whom she loved, and she was happy. What good woman is not content with the sense of possessing all her heart desires?

At the Couronne d'Or it was a busy morning, for, as we have said, many were going to Versailles, and several parties had

stayed to eat their *déjeuner* at the well-known inn. So Jacques was much too occupied to think of his daughter, and it was only when his own breakfasting time drew near, and the Parisian customers had rolled on to Versailles, that he had time to think of anything. Then his tongue began to scold. That baggage Marie had forgotten to scour the frying-pan, so that the *omelette au lard* that his daughter loved, with just a *soupeçon* of garlic and a light flavouring of some herb known only to himself, was delayed; the breakfast was late, and Jacques, being hungry, was cross. At length, everything being ready, his wrath turned towards his absent daughter. Why was not Virginie down? These women had no sense of punctuality. They spoil the best fare in the world by keeping it waiting. It was too bad—so grumbled Jacques. Then having fretted and fumed another five minutes he started up, and shouted, ‘Pierre, run to thy mistress’s room, and tell her I wait, and that everything is spoiling! Come, hurry thou up, young hound!’

Pierre, to escape the usual blow, darted up the stairs. He was away several minutes, to Jacques’s infinite disgust. He seated himself in his accustomed place ready to commence. What could the girl be about? In one of her vapours, perchance. She should have let him know. Where was Louison?

‘Louison!’ he shouted, but as he shouted Pierre appeared.

‘Well?’ asked Jacques.

‘Monsieur,’ said Pierre, ‘I knocked several times, but no answer. Then I made so bold as to open the door. Mademoiselle was not in the *salon*, so I gave monsieur’s message through the open door of her bedroom, but no answer. Then I looked in, and she was not there.’

‘Does monsieur look for mademoiselle?’ said one of the servants. ‘I saw her go to the garden about an hour ago, and have not seen her return.’

Jacques bounded from his chair. This was intolerable. ‘Virginie!’ he cried, even before he reached the door. ‘Virginie!’ he shouted, shielding his eyes from the glare of the sun on the threshold, and vainly endeavouring to discover her in the garden. ‘Virginie!’ he shouted again, now commencing to be alarmed. No. He looked round the garden—she was not there. He even examined each walk. No Virginie. Suddenly the poor man grew pale. What—but he dared hardly think the terrible supposition. He rushed to her room. She certainly was not there, but on her table he spied a letter. With trembling hands

he took it. It was in her handwriting. Well he knew that hand. Had he not watched it forming these many years? It was addressed '*A mon père.*' He felt he knew the contents. He sat down in the midst of the little room he had taken such pains to make ready for her but a short time before. Each bit of furniture he remembered buying, and placing as it stood—for her. Was she gone? He dared not open the letter for fear his suspicions would be realised, but sat pale and trembling, with the drops of perspiration on his brow. Then he thought perhaps he wronged her, and with nervous haste broke the seal.

'Father,' Virginie had written, 'for some time I have been most unhappy under thy roof, and thou too hast been unquiet and anxious. It is better then that I should leave. Hadst thou listened to me two days ago I would have told thee all. Thou wouldst not, and didst upbraid me with suspicion and harshness. I cannot live to be so treated. I have never been suspected or watched, and thou hast been the one to suspect. I can no longer sacrifice myself to my duty, I therefore leave. Do not inquire further, but cease to remember thou hadst a daughter. So will the Couronne d'Or be freed from one who has been but a trouble and an anxiety during her stay.'

She did not even sign this cruel letter. It must be said in her excuse that she never had the tender affection toward a father most children feel. Her childhood and youth had been spent at Chartres, far enough from the Couronne d'Or to make it unadvisable to make the journey to Sèvres even during the *vacance*. She knew, therefore, nothing of her father's temper or habits, except what she saw during the very brief visits he made to Chartres once a year. The difference between the life at the Couronne d'Or and the convent was very great. Had she been brought up under her father's eye, had she become accustomed to his ways, she would not have failed to perceive the real love he had for her, and he would have grown to know her sensitive and affectionate disposition. Under these happier circumstances it would have been impossible for her to write so cruel a letter. But she had been deeply hurt; and, besides, she was bent on sacrificing herself and her past, of which her father and her position formed part, to her love for La Beauce. She had then intentionally made this letter cold and decided; yet had she seen poor Jacques after he had read it she would have repented her cruelty. He sat like one turned to stone. His feelings were so numbed that he hardly had power to think. Pale as death, the

letter clenched in his hand, his eyes fixed and staring, he was found half an hour after by one of his servants, who came to ask him about the *déjeuner*. With a terrible cry and a fearful oath he bade him begone, and shut the door. Then he began to pace the room, up and down, up and down, and they listening outside heard him muttering incoherently. At last one of them thought of Rousselet, and they sent for him quickly. Rousselet was at home when the messenger—it was Pierre—arrived. He had hardly recovered from his excitement of the day before.

‘Well, what is it?’ he asked, as he opened the door of his room.

‘Ah, monsieur!’ cried the affrighted boy, ‘come at once to the Couronne d’Or. Maître Jacques is gone out of his mind, and mademoiselle cannot be found.’

Rousselet felt the blood leave his head. He would have fallen had he not providentially found support.

‘Gone!’ he cried. ‘Mademoiselle?’

‘It is true, monsieur,’ answered Pierre. ‘Will monsieur come at once to poor Maître Jacques?’

Rousselet had more command of his feelings than his more impressionable friend. With an effort he pulled himself together, and swiftly followed the messenger. Only when he arrived at the Couronne d’Or, and entered Virginie’s room, he was as pale as Jacques himself. They stood thus looking at each other—these two friends. Each had lost what he most valued in the world; neither was able to offer comfort to the other. Indeed it was Jacques who first spoke. ‘Virginie! My friend!’ he said, and in the effort burst into tears.

‘Where?’ Rousselet asked, hoarsely.

‘The letter!’ sobbed Jacques. ‘Read for thyself,’ and he held out the crumpled sheet.

Rousselet took the letter, and read. What had broken down the spirit of Jacques loosened the tongue of his friend. He saw La Beauce in this, nothing but La Beauce. He cursed him as a false-hearted coward. He swore he would seek him out, and kill him like a dog. He seemed not to think of Virginie, but only of the vengeance to be worked on this hated aristocrat.

Meanwhile Jacques wept, and repeated ‘Virginie, my child!’

‘Why do you weep?’ cried the furious Rousselet. ‘Let us follow them at once. There are laws in France, I believe; and if not, the people will interfere in the cause of a father.’

But Jacques said, ‘No, she has left me; let her go. I should

do her harm in moving in the matter. I have no child now. Has she not thrown me off ?'

'But I who love her will follow,' cried Rousselet. 'I will be revenged !'

'Would that bring back my girl, think you ?' sobbed Jacques. 'I, too, hate this aristocrat ; but were he dead, would Virginie return ? Let them be till the time comes when he tires of her. Alas !' sobbed he, 'have I not seen many such foolish girls abandoned ?'

In vain Rousselet urged pursuit and vengeance. Jacques was firm, and in the end even Rousselet was forced to own that perhaps it were better to wait. The bitter rage that filled his heart was treasured there. It was the one passion of his life now. So let La Beauce beware.

Wearily Jacques descended to his kitchen. He felt occupation was necessary to him to keep him from madness. He was aged ten years at least in appearance. His step lost all its elasticity, his eye its brightness, only it was not well when any of his subordinates forgot their duty. His temper was more irritable than ever. He was as careful as usual of his business. The Couronne d'Or flourished ; each day fresh calls were made on its resources, as the going backwards and forwards to Versailles continued ever to increase. Every evening came Rousselet to his friend, and nightly they talked together. Tacitly the name of Virginie was never mentioned ; but when there was a pause in their talk, and there often was, each knew the other was thinking of her. The little rooms upstairs were locked, and Jacques kept the key. No one entered but he. Every morning the good man set to work, and with his own hand dusted and polished each object in the room, till the place was as bright and clean as the day she first saw it. He even placed flowers in the Sèvres jar Rousselet had painted, that all might be as she had left it. He took a sad pleasure in the work.

Alas ! no word came from her. It was as though she had died.

CHAPTER XVI.

A SAD AUTUMN.

ROUSSELET now threw himself heart and soul into politics. He was often at Versailles. He heard the debates in the National Assembly, and each evening told Jacques the stirring news. Now it is the recall of M. Necker; now a speech of M. Mirabeau, 'who, though he is a Comte, is full of zeal for the people.' There is much talking—too much Rousselet thinks, for there are six hundred members, and all will have their say. Yet the good cause progresses, and Rousselet saw that public opinion—a new thing in France—was beginning to assert itself.

M. Mirabeau frequently passed and repassed the Couronne d'Or, for his pleasures—none of the purest—led him much to Paris, and occasionally he would stop at Sèvres and partake of Jacques's delicacies. A seamed and carbuncled face had this man, with a shock of black hair, telling his Italian origin; a loud voice, and decided manner. He was seldom alone. Sometimes the judicious M. Dumont, who, they said, got up his facts for him, accompanied the great Tribune; and sometimes some lady, whose antecedents could not be inquired into, came with him. I fear M. Mirabeau had many of the weaknesses of his class, which were unbecoming in one esteemed the father of the people.

Others, too, passed to and fro from Paris. The mysterious Duc d'Orléans, with his red flabby face and heavy look (there was nothing remarkable about the man, but that he was clad in the most English-cut garments; he, Jacques noticed, never now alighted at the Couronne d'Or, as had been his wont formerly); and M. Cazalès and Abbé Sieyès, and Barnave with gallant youthful gait—Rousselet knew them all by sight, and would point them out to friend Jacques, for he lived now at the Couronne d'Or, accepting his friend's warmly proffered hospitality; and be sure Jacques was well plied with liberal doctrine, and that his hatred of the *seigneurs* was kept well alive.

But in July Rousselet had much cause for satisfaction. Starving for want of food, and nigh naked in their destitution—hence they grew to be called 'Sansculottes'—in despair the people turned against the nobles, whose luxury was a continual contrast to the want and misery around. All through the country princely edifices blazed up as tokens of their wrath.

Rousselet rubbed his hands as he recounted these things to Jacques. La Beauce had a château—what if it were to blaze too! Jacques was wrath enough with this Comte, who, he thought, must have cruelly deceived his daughter, judging him by the experiences he had gained during his period of service among these same aristocrats; but he was greatly afraid for Virginie's sake. He could not, indeed he dared not, in the presence of the vindictive Rousselet even hint his fears. He was ill at ease. Deep down in his inner consciousness he had a feeling that all had not been well; that his jealous care of Virginie was a doubt of her truth. Had she not said so? Did he not remember her mother, and the way he had gained her hand? When he was by himself he would draw out the cruel letter and weep over it. What could he have done to lose the love of this daughter? Surely something terrible, for she did love him once; and was she not the child of his own Virginie, and incapable of doing so unnatural a thing as leave her father's house without great provocation? It was his rough disposition, he thought, his want of refinement that must have frightened her away; and he half forgave her when he remembered how little he was fitted for her society. Only La Beauce he did not forgive, and with him he hated the whole class of nobles. He agreed with Rousselet that they should be swept away, and was loud in his indignation; but he made a mental reservation in respect to Virginie, and anything that might affect her.

Then came the glorious days of the 13th and 14th of July. The commotion and ferment of the people of Paris found an echo even in Sèvres. When the reports of an insurrection reached the Couronne d'Or Rousselet could stand the suspense no longer, but hurried to the capital. In distant Sèvres they listened and wondered all day long. For on the morning of the 14th they heard cannon, and in the still summer day even musketry. Who were firing? Was it the soldiers massacring the patriots? And yet they had heard that the *Gardes Françaises* were friendly. Then, later in the afternoon, some soldiers with Baron Besenval marched through the town. The townsmen examined them anxiously. No, these had not fought. What, then, was this noise of firing, lasting from one till five in the afternoon? Then came a rumour. It is the Bastille the people attack. The Bastille! Why the name even brought pallor to the cheek! And do the people dare? It is a brave people; they do well. And each Sèvres wished them success.

All that day Jacques was in a wild state. The Bastille! The stronghold of terror, the mainspring of aristocracy. 'Well done, ye brave patriots!' he cried.

Late in the evening came Rousselet.

He was black with powder and smoke. A little crowd had followed him into the inn kitchen. He was mounted on a table. A cup of wine was given him, and he told the strange tale. 'Yes, my friends, the Bastille has fallen! No longer is it to be a prison. No longer will it frown over the good city of Paris. Down with it, and with it all feudal rights, all distinctions of rank.' So rang the tale through the room. And all present shouted 'Long live the people!'

Through all France went the cry of triumph. What if blood has been shed? Who can tell the thousands who have worn out their lives in that vile place? All the horrible stories of its dreadful secrets were raked up and printed, and many new ones were invented, and circulated in broad sheets through the city and country. What wonder, then, the people were roused, and even those most peaceably inclined were excited to such a pitch, that the murders of the defenders of the Bastille, and of M. Foulon and his son-in-law, were looked on as lawful acts of vengeance? Rousselet brought Jacques the celebrated reply of young Monsieur Barnave, on application being made to avenge old M. Foulon's murder, 'And was the blood then so very pure?' and Jacques, like the majority of Frenchmen, seemed struck with the fact, and merely said, 'That's true enough!' All thought the cost of their freedom was cheap at the expense of a few of the lives of these men who had held them so long in bondage. For now they would be free.

Then came what was called the first emigration, when hundreds of the titled classes, led by the King's brother, left France in fear, to rank themselves with the enemies of their country; Jacques was not alone in cursing the cowards. From that moment the dread of treason arose in France that destroyed the confidence of all classes, and led afterwards to so much that was terrible.

Rousselet noticed about this time that his friend was very thoughtful. He was surprised when he heard what it was that occupied Jacques's mind.

'My friend,' said the worthy fellow, 'thou knowest the lengthened period my family have carried on this hostelry. We have honourably entertained even kings in this house; and the Couronne d'Or is the symbol that the highest is not too high

for this place. Now I, Jacques le Blanc, descended from all these worthy men who served under and were proud of this sign, solemnly declare I will no longer be represented by this symbol that has been degraded by the desertion of the sons of St. Louis. To-morrow, my friend, thou shalt aid me to alter the obsolete emblem. In future I shall serve under the sign of "Au Peuple Uni."

Jacques was as good as his word. The old sign disappeared, and in its place appeared one on which was written in golden letters, 'Au Peuple Uni.' At the same time the well-known silver goblet out of which the two kings had drunk was brought down from the shelf of honour, on which it had remained to be admired by all for so many years. Now Jacques put it out of sight in a place of safety.

In these changes, perhaps, Jacques showed his forethought and wisdom. The aristocrats, who used to frequent his house, had mostly disappeared, and now the gentlemen of the long robe, who came flocking to Versailles on business, and who were many of them in the Assembly, cordially approved of the change. Nay more, when famine came upon the land during these autumn months, and starving people looked with suspicion on those who had food—and be sure the careful Jacques was well provided—they so applauded the new title that no one felt jealous of the superior comfort of so good a patriot. Yet it was really a mighty wrench to poor Jacques's feelings to change the title of his inn. The Couronne d'Or had been the sign under which he had been born. It had always been associated with success, comfort, and home, and he had been brought up to consider it a kind of palladium under which it was an honour to serve. Now all his old landmarks seemed to be changing, all his old traditions fading away, and even the old sign, that had swung there so many years, seemed to have lost its old powers. It reminded him of Virginie and the past, of which it was not good for him now to think too much. It typified the old France—the *régime* of king and nobles, the feudal times; and all these things were changed now that the Bastille had ceased to exist. Let it go then—down with it! In standing at his door, and gazing as he did from old habit at the place where the old Couronne d'Or had swung, where he saw the gay new sign and read the title, 'Au Peuple Uni,' there grew within him a new faith—real and tangible—a new hope that the busy legislators sitting up there at Versailles would, from their wisdom and patriotism, evolve something better than the old

régime, something to which Frenchmen could cling, some lasting benefit, some glorious constitution, as a cure for all the evils from which the country now suffered. Alas! There never was a constitution, however deftly devised, which could last without constant change. Tinker as well as they were able, this National Assembly could not frame one to hold water. As yet, however, all France was full of hope.

So passed the autumn without any news from Virginie. More and more the heart of Jacques le Blanc was hardened against the Comte de la Beauce, more and more he grew to believe that Rousselet was right in his hatred of aristocrats. Still he made no inquiries after his daughter. He was firmly convinced she would come back to him some day, penitent and heart-broken, as he had seen so many girls return to their families. Then it would be for him to forgive, then he would show her the genuineness of his love. Till then he thought he could not bear to trace his girl to her shame—he would far rather remain in ignorance. It was not for him to draw attention to her disgrace. He would never hear her name mentioned with levity. When his neighbours inquired after her he told them that she had found the life at the Couronne d'Or distasteful, and had returned to the convent where she had been educated. Only he and Rousselet suspected the truth.

CHAPTER XVII.

JACQUES FOLLOWS THE KING TO PARIS.

JACQUES on one raw October afternoon saw a strange sight as he stood at his own door. A vast crowd was coming from Paris. On they came across the bridge of Sèvres up the long street—a mob of women; while far as the eye could see reached the same mob, till it was lost towards Paris, whence came distant sounds of bells ringing and drums beating. Jacques quickly had up his shutters in his lower windows, not from fear of these good women, but as a precaution against any rough play from evil-disposed people (perhaps in the pay of the Court?), who delight to bring discredit on all gatherings of patriots. His door he left ostentatiously open, and stood there himself with his friend Rousselet to show he had no suspicion. So he saw the crowd pass by, led by M. Maillard, the Bastille hero, well known to Rousselet. He saw Demoiselle

Théroigne, strangely attired in a helmet, with a pike in her hand, and seated on a cannon, while around surged a throng of women, all mud-bedraggled and wild, with their unkempt hair hanging loose and wet, their eyes haggard, and their cheeks pale with hunger. Jacques quickly ordered all the loaves in his house to be brought out to supply them. Already Chaillot, a village they had passed, had supplied the hunger of some, and it was a touching sight to see those who had eaten make way for those who had not—though none had had their fill. Jacques was much struck at the generosity and self-denial displayed.

Firmin, baker of Sèvres, did not show a like alacrity. Bakers in Paris had been before now hung before their own doors. So this poor man knew, and grudgingly he produced his stock of loaves. The crowd saved him any trouble of distribution. They hustled poor Firmin on one side, and every loaf in his shop was soon torn to pieces and consumed.

Jacques offered a cup of wine to M. Maillard, who, indeed, stood greatly in need of something to moisten his throat, dry and stiff with speechifying, and shouting to his unruly followers. He would have produced more; but honest M. Maillard, and others who led this army of Mænads, forbade him, fearing the effect of wine on the excitability of these women. 'On to Versailles!' he shouted, and his lieutenants re-echoed the cry. 'We waste our time. On to Versailles!'

'What do you there?' asked Jacques.

'We will bring the King to Paris to be in the midst of his people, and all will be well,' they cried.

They moved forward through the mud and slush, full of faith in this simple panacea for their poverty, starvation, and misery. Crowds of ruffianly men followed this first army of women, men whose looks told more of the galleys than of honest labour. They were from the St. Antoine quarter, it was said. To these shuffling, skulking creatures, Jacques shut his door, and, when some quiet was restored to the little town, retired to his sanctum to talk over the course of affairs with Rousselet. But there was to be no peace for him that day. Soon a measured tramp of armed men was heard on the Sèvres stones, mixed with the clatter of hoofs and jingle of spurs and sabres, and General de la Fayette, with mighty plumes on his hat, passed by, surrounded by his staff and followed by regiment after regiment of the Garde Nationale. It seemed as though all Paris were marching on Versailles.

It was late in the afternoon, long after dark on that October day, when these had passed trampling through the mud, and the street of Sèvres was quiet. Then men sat indoors and wondered what all this portended; and Rousselet, full of glee, warmed his hands at the fire and chuckled to Jacques, who smoked his pipe thoughtfully. 'Now at last these proud ones shall be humbled,' he cried. And when Jacques expressed some fear lest all these people, hungry and excited, should be guilty of much violence, added, still laughing, 'No matter; have I not often heard thee say, "Omelettes cannot be made without breaking of eggs?"'

Through the night they anxiously waited. Sleeping lightly they hear the sound of horses' hoofs as men galloped by to Paris. Some they question from the window.

'How goes it up there?' they cry.

'Well, very well,' is shouted back as the horsemen gallop into the darkness.

In the morning wagons, full of bread and provisions, passed through Sèvres, to feed the people at Versailles. Still no certain news came, and the morning passed in anxious uncertainty. The day was foggy and drizzling, not a tempting day to leave a comfortable fireside. Still, Rousselet's eagerness was so great, that he rushed off to Versailles to see what was happening. Jacques, left to himself, was ever going to the door to gather intelligence. News was brought by some who had joined the procession of the day before, and who now returned weary, damp, and starving, to say that all was in confusion up there, that some people had been killed, that the Assembly was sitting in permanent *séance*, and as yet nothing was settled. Then at last came the news that the King had yielded, and was preparing to return to Paris and live in the midst of his faithful people, at which every one felt a sensation of relief. Shortly after this Rousselet returned highly elated, and confirmed this good news.

At about two the long procession approached. Jacques was at his door to witness the strange scene. What is this round which people are dancing and singing like mad folk? On pikes are being carried the grizzly heads of two poor *gardes du corps*, who were killed doing their duty. The crowd dance them up and down shouting in chorus, 'We shall want no more bread! We bring with us the baker, the baker's wife, and the little muffin boy!' In their horrible glee they stop opposite the shop of the barber of Sèvres, and insist on his dressing and powdering these two poor

heads as they would have been dressed and powdered had the miserable owners been on service with their King. Jacques, who lived just opposite this poor barber, grew pale at the sight; but Rousselet merely remarked, 'Thou seest, my friend, they have broken the eggs, now we shall have our omelette.'

The poor barber, a nervous, excitable man, never quite recovered the horror of that afternoon's work.

Now the King's carriage drew near, and in it sat Louis XVI., his Queen, and children; then followed other carriages with the *service du Roi*—the maids of honour, the lords-in-waiting, the pages, and all the equipage and suite, without which as yet the King cannot move. Then the equipages of the members of the Assembly, for the members of that august body had determined that they could not be separated from their Sovereign. And round all shouted and danced an excited mob of people, firmly believing that now everything would go well.

Mournfully Jacques watched the long procession. He felt his occupation was gone. There could be no passing and re-passing to and from Versailles, no more loitering by the way, now the Court and the Assembly had gone to Paris. The Crown of France had departed, his Couronne d'Or had ceased to exist, and the *peuple uni* would no longer come that way. A king and court are useful to men in Jacques's business. They are the centre of a great circle ever changing and on the move. Without these people how was Jacques to live in the little town of Sèvres? The business of so small a place would not suffice for a house of entertainment on the scale of the *ci-devant* Couronne d'Or. Jacques, as he watched the King pass, could not but own that, if a King of France, descendant of St. Louis, went to Paris, led thither by the march of events, it was not derogatory in him, the descendant of the Le Blancs who had so long thriven on the outskirts of the Court, to go there too. It was another wrench, an uprooting, a break in his life. But then had his life not been wrecked by the departure of Virginie?

That evening, after consultation with Rousselet, Jacques le Blanc determined to leave the house where he had lived so many years, to reduce the *Peuple Uni* to the size of the ordinary inn of a small town, to dispose of the business, and start for Paris. The very next day, with his usual energy, he set to work arranging his affairs, and in a short time all was ready.

Then came the business of packing. It was the furniture of Virginie's room that gave him the greatest anxiety. All the rest

he disposed of, but these things he would keep, and wherever he went he would always have that room exactly as it had been, in case his daughter returned. With loving hands he himself swathed these precious things in bands of hay, thinking sadly all the time of the joy he had in seeing them placed in that little room not a year ago! All had changed now. She had gone—whither he knew not—he did not dare to inquire, and now he himself was going! It seemed hard at his time of life to begin afresh. ‘Courage,’ he whispered to himself, ‘thy daughter shall return to thee, and all shall yet be well! Disgraced? Who dare say so? To me she shall always be the same! Is she not the child of my lost one?’ And in his work he would pause and think—ay, and weep, being an impressionable man.

To pack these things was the work of time. Rousselet meanwhile had made his light preparations, and was eager to be off, and plunge into the midst of the mighty life in Paris with which he had so much sympathy. Yet would he not hurry his friend at his labours. He used to watch him at his work, lending a hand when required, for he too had an affection for these objects, that had been hers while she was with her father. But the sight of them also rekindled his hatred of La Beauce. Revenge was the strong passion of his life. Affection for Virginie had changed to hate of her supposed seducer, as wine turns to vinegar. He felt full of hope for France, and strong within himself, this stern little man, capable of great things—and, in the turn of affairs, who knows what might happen?

One day he entered unseen by Jacques, whom he found in deep thought. Looking up from his musing the father perceived his friend.

‘Ah,’ he cried, ‘is it thou? Thou knowest I take all these with me for her. She shall have her room ever ready for her when she comes. These things remind us of her, do they not? Rememberest thou that piece of Sèvres thou gavest her on her arrival? She was wont to fill it with flowers each day. See,’ said he, ‘thou shalt have it again to remind thee of her, that, if anything should happen to me, thou mayest defend her. I ask thee no promise. I know thou lovest her, and wilt keep this as a memorial.’

The tears stood in the stern Rousselet’s eyes as he received the vase. He could say nothing, but he took the hand of his friend, and pressed it, and with his treasure left the room.

A few days after all was ready. The furniture and sundry heavy trunks were safely packed on carts, and with sad hearts the two friends took their way to Paris, leaving the Couronne d'Or or Peuple Uni for ever.

CHAPTER XVIII.

VIRGINIE.

WHERE was Virginie all this while, and how sped she?

During the long drive to Paris with the Comte de la Beauce, Virginie was lost in a dream of love. To be by the side of the man she adored, to feel his arm round her waist, to meet his loving eyes when she gazed at him was to her perfect happiness.

But as they drew near Paris La Beauce said to her—

‘My dearest, there was one part of your letter I did not understand. Why did you think I should despise you?’

‘You did not know my motives for acting as I have done,’ she whispered. ‘You could only think that I was about to outrage all the *convenances* of life, to forsake my father and my home. If you did not love me, as I do you, you could not understand why I should do this. Ah! I feel already that your love will more than suffice to me for the sacrifice I make; can I hope that you will be equally blind to the looks of doubt with which the world will regard the poor girl, who perhaps foolishly has dared to forget her position?’

La Beauce drew his head back that he might see her fair face. Her eyes were half shut in an ecstasy of love; two tears, they were of happiness, lingered for a moment on their long lashes. The lips, slightly parted, trembled with eagerness. A saint taking vows of symbolic marriage with her Redeemer might have worn such an expression. There was nothing earthly or sensual in such love. It was pure and holy feeling that led this girl to devote herself to the man she adored. La Beauce kissed away each tear.

‘May I die a thousand deaths if I betray such affection!’ he thought.

‘Virginie,’ he said aloud, ‘I should be base indeed if I did

not understand your motives. I have no care for the world or what it thinks. You alone of all the women I have ever met I consider worthy of my love. You alone have I asked to be my wife. Let us be all in all to each other, joined by every tie that Heaven ordains and the laws permit. Virginie, my wife, my own!

Here Louison, who all unobserved had not been unobservant, broke in with a loud sob.

'Thou art a brave fellow—*allez!*' she cried, 'albeit thou art a comte. Excuse, monseigneur,' she added with confusion, 'I could not but hear. I will listen no more.' And with a red face and tears streaming down from her swollen eyes she doggedly fixed her attention on the objects they were passing. For now they were in Paris. Soon they crossed the river and drew up at a comfortable hotel in the Rue du Bac, where La Beauce, having made Virginie at home in a handsome apartment, sallied forth in search of an abbé who had been his preceptor in former years, and who was now curé of the parish of St. Jacques de la Boucherie. He was lucky in finding this excellent man at home, and at once told him the tale of his love and the flight of Virginie, artfully magnifying the terror caused by the conduct of Jacques le Blanc, whom he depicted as a monster of brutality, to account for her desertion of her father. By these means, and by pointing out the desirability of saving the reputation of this innocent girl whom he wished to marry, he at length persuaded the priest to consent to perform the marriage ceremony.

'It is not strictly correct to do this,' said the Abbé. 'The father of the young lady ought to be here to give his consent. But in some cases license is given to us to dispense with such forms, that no one need find excuse for immorality.'

La Beauce, overjoyed with his success, for he had expected to find more difficulty in persuading his friend, rushed back to fetch Virginie, and that very afternoon Virginie le Blanc became Madame la Comtesse de la Beauce. The witnesses to the marriage were Louison and St. Aubray. The latter young gentleman behaved with singular circumspection during the ceremony. When that was over he embraced his cousin, after the manner of two Frenchmen, and, as he offered his congratulations, he whispered in his ear—

'All the same, perhaps thou art right. Any one would be proud of making a fool of himself for such a woman. It must be allowed my new cousin is devilish handsome.'

The young rake was charming with Virginie during the time she remained in Paris. He was never tired of running on her errands, and, in matters of dress, his advice was of more use than that of his more sober cousin.

'See, you,' he cried, 'my good Etienne knows nothing of toilette. He never looked at a pretty woman in his life. In fact, if he had not made such an excellent choice, I should have said he did not know what a pretty woman was like! Let me therefore escort you to the places where the best things are to be procured. I know them all.' And he spoke the truth.

As her husband insisted on Virginie ordering a complete trousseau for herself, such as she would have been entitled to had there been time to procure one before her marriage, she was taken to Mademoiselle Bertin to be measured for her dresses, to Mademoiselle l'Olive for her *lingerie*, and accompanied her husband and St. Aubray to Bapst and Mesnier, to have the La Beauce diamonds reset according to the latest fashion.

The Comte himself cared little for diamonds, but he knew how greatly such things are considered in the fashionable world, and he was determined that his wife should be able to hold her own in these matters with any of the great ladies of Paris.

The Comte de la Beauce had many high and mighty relatives among the *noblesse* living in Paris and Versailles. But his known liberal views had roused the anger of some, and his long residence in the country had caused most to forget his existence. He himself was well content it should be so. He disliked fashionable life in Paris, and would have been miserable with a wife to whom the gaieties of fashion were necessary. Happily Virginie was entirely of her husband's opinion. She was, moreover, anxious to get down to her country home. Paris was too near Sèvres. She feared the violence of her father. So, when she had ordered all those things thought necessary for a bride, she was anxious to leave for the country, even before her dresses were completed.

'They can follow,' she urged; 'what need is there to wait?'

St. Aubray, to whom, like most Frenchmen, the set of a new coat or the perfect taste of a lady's toilette was a matter of grave moment, was shocked at her want of enthusiasm.

'She has none of the makings of a *grande dame*,' he said with a sigh.

'God forbid she should have!' answered La Beauce.

'At least let her be presented to thy cousins the Princesse de Lambesc and the Marquise de Boissac.'

‘I see no occasion to wait. The presentation will not add to Virginie’s happiness. Our dear cousins do not trouble themselves about me, why then should I or my wife put much store on their friendship?’

‘Thou art an incorrigible republican!’ cried St. Aubray. ‘Thou shouldst have been born on the banks of the Potomac, and not the Eure!’

‘I am a Frenchman,’ answered La Beauce, ‘and proud of being a Frenchman. At the same time I can see that everything is not well with us. The ideas and prejudices of one generation suit not the next. Our times are as little like those of fifty years ago as our King is like the *Grand Monarque*.’

‘The more is the pity,’ cried the young man.

‘Nothing we can do can bring back the old *régime*, even if it were desirable, which I for one doubt. We must content ourselves with making the best we can of the present.’

‘For my part I hate the cant of the people. If the King were half a man he could put them all down with one charge of cavalry. It will have to come to that in the end—and may I be there to help!’

La Beauce knew it was useless arguing with the young man, who was full of the prejudices of his class. So he said no more. But when they were starting for the Château of La Beauce, on bidding his cousin an affectionate adieu, he said—

‘Remember, François, thou hast always a home with us.’ And Virginie, who really liked this boy, added—

‘And I hope you will look upon me as a sister, being the wife of your dear cousin Etienne.’

On their journey home the Comte, at the request of his wife, made a *détour* to avoid passing through Sèvres, which lay on the high road from Paris. Nor did he think it advisable to pay a visit to his aunt, Madame de la Rosière, at Chartres. Virginie had written already to Célimène, and had received an answer from her full of affection; but she had also written to say that her mother was in such bad health, that she had refrained from giving her the joyful news, as entire quiet had been enjoined by the doctor.

The happy bridegroom more than once urged Virginie to acquaint her father with her marriage, as, he said, was only just and fair towards him.

But Virginie, to his surprise, absolutely refused to do so. She begged to be allowed to make a sacrifice of her past. She wished

to have no father, whose presence might irritate her husband, and recall to the world that the Comte de la Beauce had made a *mésalliance*. Her husband strove to laugh her out of this idea. She was firm, however, and, with tears in her eyes, begged him to let her have her way in this matter. So he good-naturedly yielded. It would have been better for both had she not given way to her fixed idea of self-sacrifice.

In her heart she had many pangs of conscience at her conduct to her father. She knew in the eyes of the world she was doing wrong. She wished to bear all the blame, to take all the sin, in order to shield her husband from the annoyance of having to put up with a plebeian father-in-law as well as a plebeian wife. She was one of those whose happiness is not complete without some mortification of self. She loved so much that she would have sacrificed anything, or anybody, for a smile of her husband's. Yet this woman had a tender heart, and would not hurt one of the least of God's creatures had she not been blinded by love. She bore no resentment to her father. She had, as we have said, great remorse for her conduct towards him, but that very remorse she accepted as a kind of penance due for her great happiness. It is not the first time that selfishness, sin, and even crime has been committed from excess of love. Indeed, excess of love both of God and man has been guilty of more cruelty than hate itself, being the mightier motive.

Virginie's arrival at the Château de la Beauce was, according to her wish, strictly private; none beyond the domestics of her household had been apprised of the Comte de la Beauce's marriage. As they drove up to the house, the steward, who had served the Comte's father, stood bareheaded to receive them and hand madame from her coach. The lacqueys formed a line to usher her in. On the threshold the old man addressed a few words of homely welcome to his mistress, but the tears that stood in his eyes, and the faltering of his voice, when he mentioned the master whom he had known from his earliest childhood, were more eloquent tributes of praise than the best-turned sentences. La Beauce stood smiling and proud to watch the welcome accorded to his wife, who, in answer to the simple words of her husband's old retainer, gave him her hand, which he kissed with every sign of reverence and affection.

The Comte then led his bride into her future home.

The main road from Chartres to Alençon and the west runs through Courville. Shortly after passing through that little town

a branch road strikes off at right angles through thick woods, such as were dear to the nobles of France in the days before the Revolution. These woods ended in a noble avenue, leading straight up to the Château de la Beauce, and terminating in some fine wrought-iron gates of the time of Henri IV.

Within these gates there was a spacious quadrangle, on the right side of this quadrangle were the stables, on the left the *métairie*, or farm-buildings, while facing was the Château itself, with its handsome *façade* of Renaissance architecture, flanked on either side by two towers with pointed roofs, all that remained of the earlier château, built during the Gothic period. The front door, approached by a handsome flight of steps, opened into an outer vestibule, which again led to a large central hall, out of which opened again the living-rooms, all looking south on a handsome terrace, commanding a superb view over the surrounding country. Below this terrace was a fine garden, laid out by Le Notre, who had planned the gardens of Versailles, where were to be found many pleasant corners daintily decorated with statues and fountains, and brilliant with all the flowers of summer. The master of this fair demesne led his delighted wife through all these apartments, and finally out on to the terrace to admire the garden, thence through a large window into a charming room destined for her own boudoir.

Virginie's eyes filled with tears: what had she to give in return for all this but her love. She tried to express her delight, but fairly broke down, and, throwing her arms round her husband's neck, she sobbed on his shoulder.

'Etienne,' she murmured, 'what can I say but that I love you, and that I am very happy?'

The next day and for several days after La Beauce took her round to each of his tenants, and presented her to them as their future mistress. Everywhere she was received with a hearty welcome, though the praises lavished on her by these unsophisticated natives were sometimes calculated to bring a blush to her cheeks, being invariably accompanied with wishes for the future.

'Ah, M. le Comte,' cried the buxom mother of a large family, 'you have done well for yourself and for us. I feel assured so fair a lady must have as kind a heart as she has a beautiful face. Salute Madame la Comtesse,' she cried to her sturdy youngest son, a fine lad of some six years. 'Before the year is up I warrant we shall have a bonny child, whose future we can but pray may be as lucky for us as yours, M. le Comte.'

But the boy held back from shyness, hanging on to his mother's skirt, though she pushed him forward.

'Ah,' she added, 'thou art bashful now, yet in a few years thou wilt be as forward with the girls as is thy good-for-nothing father, who is for ever running after every slut about the place.' And she poured forth her matrimonial grievances in language such as is used by the people, but which would shock the ears of polite society.

(To be continued.)

A Lay of London Town.

WHAT THE HEART OF THE OLD MAN SAYETH.

O H, I came to London Town, in the days of long ago,
 With the springtide on my head, and a heart with spring
 a-glow;
 Glad of soul and blithe was I, who had oftentimes been told
 How the streets of London Town they are surely paved with gold;
 I should bask in Fortune's smile, I should never see her frown
 In the heart of London Town.

Then the life of youth was mine, and I dreamt the dreams of youth,
 And I thought of beauty's self, and the very truth of truth;
 I should fight and I should win, I should strive and I should gain;
 Yea, a goodly life were mine, and a mastery o'er pain;
 I should do as strong ones do, and my brow should wear the crown
 Of true work in London Town.

I should keep my heart of love for the dear old country folk;
 I should stand erect and strong as the stalwart ash and oak;
 In these golden-paven streets I should gather heaps of gold
 For my well-beloved ones; they should have and they should hold;
 Broadcloth brave should father don, mother wear a silken gown,
 Gained for them in London Town.

Now a many years are gone, and a many dreams are fled,
 And a many hopes are lost, and a many friends are dead.
 Have I proved all vanity, as the world-sick preacher saith,
 In the bitterness of loss, and the bitterness of death?
 Have all splendid hopes that grew in the field of youth died down
 On thy heart, O London Town?

'Twas for London Town, long since, I gave up the country sweet,
 Gracious air about my head, gracious grass about my feet;

Voice of woodland, torrents' rush, mountain summits grand and
 proud,
 Songs of birds that cannot sing 'mid the cry and throng and
 crowd;
 For the busy traffic's roar, and the fogdom dun and brown
 Of thy streets, O London Town !

Loss, and nought but loss, ye say, and ye say I ne'er shall know
 Any beautiful delight like the joy of long ago;
 Never more the tranquil sweets of the country dear and fair,
 Never any coolness like mountain breath upon my hair:
 Oh, the glory is gone for aye, do ye say, life's end and crown,
 As I sit in London Town ?

What, ye think the aim of all should be peace and quietude,
 Little brooklets running soft, never mighty roar and flood?
 What, ye think that none is blest save who lifteth happy eyes
 To the green of woodland trees and the blue of country skies?
 Nay, but your philosophy has not dreamt or guessed or known
 That which bides in London Town.

It was true what country folk long ago to me had told,
 How the streets of London Town they are surely paved with gold;
 Of that paving, by God's grace, some small portion have I won,
 Better than the share that fell to the lot of Whittington,
 When the song o' the bells came true, bells that hailed him,
 country clown,
 Thrice Lord Mayor of London Town !

Oh, the streets of London Town are alive with all the glow
 Of the glorious feet that walked up and down so long ago;
 Oh, we know the things that pass all the power of voice and speech,
 By the stately eloquence of the city's sweep and reach;
 Splendid strength and holiest grace, from whose shadow light drops
 down

On thy head, O London Town !

Oh, the beat of eager hearts ! Oh, the glory of life's great race !
 Ever on and onward yet, with a never-slackening pace !
 And the rushing sound is like swirl of some mysterious seas,
 And one glows to feel one's heart just a-beat with hearts like these.
 Oh, delight of strenuous life, past all speech and all renown,
 In thy heart, great London Town !

'Nay, but hush!' ye say, 'or else lift thy voice and cry aloud,
Do not sing a triumph-song; sit as one in darkness bowed;
How should any poet dare to be glad and proud who knows
Of the horror brooding thick, of the bitter deathly throes—
Mad injustice, rampant sin, keeping state and grinding down
Body and soul in London Town?

'Splendid things hath London Town? Dreadful things she
knoweth too;
Dost thou dare, O poet, turn eyes away, nor face their view?
Sin and horror sitting throned, over thousands holding sway,
Deadly foulness stifling close, blotting out the gracious day:
Will the Light that lighteth men ever pierce this fogdom brown
Brooding over London Town?'

And I answer, 'Brothers, yea, in my heart I know this thing,
Yet I lift my heart to praise, and I lift my voice to sing;
For I know however dark be the cloud, the sun is there,
And I know the hope of God, and I cast aside despair;
Yes, the deathly fog will lift, and the Light of lights pierce down
To the heart of London Town.'

I have lost the hopes of youth, but a better hope is mine;
I have lost old blind belief, but I cling to faith divine;
Spilt the cup of youth's bright wine, but my soul hath drunken
deep
Of the awful river of life, stream whose waters never sleep.
Little vessels may brim o'er with the self-same floods which drown
In their greatness, London Town!

Yes, I see the wrong that's piled on the wrong of centuries,
Till redressing seems to mean slaying those to quicken these;
English women pined and starved till despair has bid them meet,
Face to face and hand to hand, death, or life upon the street;
English men in manhood's prime, soul and body trampled down
In the depth of London Town.

This I see, and more I see; yea, I see the hearts that burn
With the flame that nigh consumes, and my heart on them doth
yearn;
And I clasp their loyal hands, bless them as they go along,
Great hearts, loving much the right, therefore hating much the
wrong;
Going on for no reward, caring not to win renown
As they work in London Town.

Oh, I see them dare the plunge; oh, I watch them breast the
flood,
Stretch their hands abroad to swim, these our gallant ones and
good;
Oh, I see the heavy surge of the great wan water rise,
Till it dash above their heads, till it hide them from my eyes.
Will they reach the sinking ones, whom the floods are fain to
drown?

Yes, and save in London Town!

Oh, because of such as these, I am glad that I can say
I have lived in London Town, as I stand and breathe to-day;
And I glow to look on those who would give the rights of men
To the men who suffer so, having lost them, once again;
And I think that God doth smile on their work, to bless and
crown

This their work in London Town.

EMILY H. HICKEY.

Curiosities of School-boy Wit.

EVERY walk in life has its humorous dashings, provided a man has but a kindly eye and a good heart; and although the pathway of a schoolmaster is beset with a bristling array of petty worries, still even he may tread and stamp fearlessly upon the threatening burs and nettles if he choose; and, moreover, he may gather at the same time many a bright, gay, and beaming floweret.

In certain contributions furnished by me some twelve months ago I presented to the public several such bouquets, consisting of treasures which I had not only gathered, but likewise carefully preserved betwixt the leaves of my scholastic notebook and diary; and now I again turn over these leaves and make a further selection from my party-coloured specimens.

Children's impressions of Scriptural inculcations, &c., are often vague and eccentrically erroneous.

An ordinary and uninitiated individual would not for one moment suspect, for instance, that a child could misapprehend the meaning of the following portion of the Fourth Commandment: 'For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and *all that in them is*; and rested,' &c.;—and yet the following story is perfectly true.

A schoolmaster had taken his children for a day's excursion to the seaside. Standing on the beach, encircled by his eager little listeners and gazers, the teacher said, as he pointed to the blue expanse:—

'Everything which God created was pronounced good, my lads, though perhaps you may be disposed to think that this broad blue tossing ocean is the most wonderful of the great Creator's works.'

'If you please, teacher,' asked one of the little scholars, tremblingly clutching at the schoolmaster's coat-tails, and looking

with wondering eyes towards the sea—‘please, teacher, and where—where are *all the Tingthemys*?’

The head master of a large London school informed me that, to his utter astonishment, he accidentally found out that during prayers several of his lower standard children innocently converted that clause of the Lord’s Prayer, ‘Lead us not into temptation,’ into ‘Lead us not into *Thames Station*!’ The master could scarce believe his ears, and in order to test whether the lads really understood the words in the inapposite sense in which they certainly repeated them, he asked one of them:

‘Where do we ask God not to lead us to, my boy?’

‘Into *Thames Station*, sir.’

The master stroked his chin, and pretended to fumble threateningly for his cane, as he incisively interrogated:

‘What *Station*, my boy, do you say?’

‘Please, sir, *Thames Station*, sir,’ persisted the boy in quite an injured tone, or as if piqued at the master’s distrust of his word.

The schoolmaster gave it up.

Yes, beyond a doubt, the lad thought that *Thames Station* was some horrible hell, where furied locomotives rushed whistling about at their own sweet will, waiting for the coming of unprayerful little boys and girls.

The first *literary* example which I give is an extract from the essay of a boy in the Third Standard of the school. He was nearly thirteen years of age, but, as the parents had for many years succeeded in evading the compulsory clause of the Education Act by means of ‘doctors’ certificates,’ frequent removals, &c., the lad was only fit for the above low standard. The subject for composition was ‘*The Childhood of Moses*.’

The lad’s effusion opens as follows:

‘It was not in England where all about little *Moses* happened, but in a place what the Bible says is Egypt. There is a big river called the Nile runs right through the middle of it, which overflowed its banks every year reglar. Likewise bullrushes and crockodiles.’

After giving an account of the King’s proclamation that all Hebrew male children should be cast into the river, the lad continues:

‘Now little baby boy *Moses* had a sister about sixteen, and a father and mother which was Jews. And *Moses* mother couldnt abare to drownd her little boy, so she made a cradle same as they

used to make arks. Then she put her little baby in this here cradle, and carried it to the river, and put it on the water amongst some bullrushes so as it couldnt float down. And who do you think as it was that used to sit on the grass all day long watching as it didnt get loose? It was that there sister Mirium what I said he had. She was a very good young woman and did not mind the cold grass, because she new as she was in the right, and that the King would be perhaps slain.

'This wicked King had a daughter, as you would think she was. She used to go out bathing same as boys, only she didnt swim. She only just went in up to about her knees, and then used to put the water over her head down her body, and then used to tell the other women and her father as she had been in. The women could not see how far she had been in, because of the bullrushes which you have seen on the wall.

'One morning she got undresst where Mirium was sitting on the grass, and she walked straight in up to her knees, to where the cradle was. When she saw him, she took him up in her arms, and run back to the bank shouting out as she had found a baby while she was swimming. The women all came round, and Mirium edjed in among them. The lady was so pleased as she had got a baby, that she didnt get dresst till she had settled things. But it was not hers, because it was not brought. Only found.

'And Mirium said, "Pharoh's daughter, shall I go and find a nurse for you?" and if the lady didnt go and say yes straight off. Then Mirium run away fast as you, and who do you think she fetched for a nurse? Moseses mother, as had had him brought to her.

'And Pharoh's daughter said unto her, "I will actshully give you wages for nursing this baby." And so Moseses mother nursed her own little baby without laughing, fear she should be found out and not get good wages.'

The essay winds up with a brief account of Moses' life in the royal palace, and concludes with the sentence, 'This is the childhood of Moses.'

I now give a few short characteristic extracts from a number of essays written by boys in the *highest* class of the school (*i.e.* the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Standards), and all bearing upon the same subject, viz. '*Kindness*.' They were produced on April 10, 1889, and as this happened to be the day before I delivered my lecture, '*Studies of School Life*,' at the Working Men's College, Great Ormond Street, I carried them with me

thither, and made them form a complement of my discourse. The reading of the effusions caused unbounded merriment.

However, space will only permit me to give the very briefest selections. Here, then, is a paragraph from one of the essays:

'By being kind, a person may rise in the world, as the following story will show. Mr. Smith was a poor boy. At first he was a paper boy. One day, while he was selling his papers, he caught sight of a little girl trying to get across the road, but could not for the number of carriages. He at once went to her assistance, and carried her safely across the road. A little while after this, Mr. Smith had a paper stall on nearly every railway station in England.'

I may state that I was so struck with this really touching anecdote of the present leader of the House of Commons, that I experienced a strong desire to learn whether its essential outlines were authentic. I walked into the class-room, and said to the teacher:

'Will you let R——' (the writer of the essay) 'come to me for a moment?'

Out marched the lad after me, as bold and proud as a bantam cock.

'This pretty story,' I said, tapping with my fingers the bottom paragraph of his composition exercise, 'relating to Mr. W. H. Smith, Member of Parliament—where did you get it from, my lad?'

'Please, sir, I heerd of it, sir!' the boy answered immediately.

'You heard of it, did you? And who told it you, my lad? Come, try to think.'

However, it was of no use. I only elicited from him that he had 'known it for ever so long,' and that 'a lot of boys knew of it as well.' And there I was reluctantly compelled to let the matter drop.

Another of the pupils concludes his effusion as follows:

'Some boys think it good amusement to tie a kettle to a dog's tail, but this is being put a stop to by a society called the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Horses are very common in England. There is a new law come out which is that anybody found working an horse without any food will be taken into custody.'

Whilst a third lad's last paragraph runs:

'When a horse has a load of stones, to draw up a hill, and

his master hits him, with the whip, you ought to tell him not to hit him, but pat him on the head, and be kind to him. Then he would try all the harder to draw it up the hill. Once an Indian woman was not kind to her baby. She put it in front of an elephant, so that it would be crushed to death. The elephant, instead of hurting the child, filled his trunk with water, and drenched the woman. Then he stood still, and looked at her, as much as to say, "Now be kind to your baby."

The answer which a child once rendered me during a physiology lesson partakes, perhaps, more of the pathetic than the humorous.

I was giving a lesson upon the human heart, and, as is my wont, in order to make my teaching as demonstrational and practical as possible, I procured for the lads' inspection the most approximate exemplification of the subject in hand. In this particular case I had sent round to the butcher's for a sheep's heart; and I permitted the members of the class to see, touch, and handle it for themselves.

In the course of the lesson, I asked the question:

'What is the difference, then, betwixt a sheep's heart and the heart of a man or woman?' As a matter of fact (I may be permitted to remind the reader), the two have a most remarkable similarity.

Amongst others, one poor, pale-looking lad put out his hand.

'Well, B —,' I said, 'what difference is suggested to you?'

'Why, sir,' answered the boy, a glow of feeling rising to his cheek, 'a sheep's heart is the softest; for you can bite a sheep's heart, but a woman's heart you break.'

And then I remembered that poor little B——'s mother *had* died of a broken heart, the result of a husband's brutality and desertion.

The next essay from which I take an extract was written by a lad in the Fourth Standard of the school. The subject for composition was *Flowers*.

After describing the flowers to be seen in any ordinary garden plot, the young essayist continues:

'Now, in the country the flowers grow wild in the fields, though not so close together, and not in squares and rounds. And nobody believes it till they go in the train; but certainly boys and girls can run amongst them, and pull up as many as they

like, and fill their arms and baskets, and bring them home to there fathers and mothers. And the teacher said that if we could only go the next day, there would be just as many flowers again. Some boys would not believe what the teacher said, but I believe that it is true, for I believe that God can easy do miracles, because I believe that the flowers are not stuck in by men or polecemen after it is dark, else what about taking so much pulling out? When I am a man I shall go the next day. I should so like to live in a house in the middle of the fields, so that I could always see them flowers all round me, and the trains going by on them green banks. Perhaps when I am a man I shall try to find a house there, and a kind woman in the inside of it.'

The following effort is a selection from a Third Standard lad's composition exercise upon *The Donkey*. Only the first two paragraphs of the essay are omitted:

'The Donkey is one of that tribe of beasts on which the cane has no effect, for the harder you hit it the slower it goes. Your fathers never use a whip for there donkeys, because they no it would not hurt them. For the Donkey rather likes to feel a whip, as it only tikles him and makes him feel joyfull and hungry. The best thing to punish a Donkey with is firstly a short thick cane for ears and belly; and secundly, a broomstick cut in two for backbone and back legs. He will then go betwixt four and five miles an hour. The donkeys which you see painted yellow and blue on the school pictures are what are called jews asses. These tribes of donkeys go many miles an hour, and will follow there masters like dogs and lambs becose of kindness. The young ones are sometimes called kolts and foals of asses. Therefore, if you have a niced young donkey show mercy unto it, and it might grow into a kolt or the foal of an ass. There is also the tribe of wild asses which prowl upon the top of rocks, and never slip over, even in winter. They are larger than our moddern donkeys, and surer footed. In the night time they climb down, and feed like rabbits upon the poor farmers hard-earned vegitebles.'

The branch of secular work which children abhor more than any other is beyond a doubt 'Grammar and Analysis.' I have frequently noticed that during this lesson the lads grow restless and even irritable, and the discipline becomes, in consequence, more difficult to maintain.

Hence, I can very well understand that irritableness, quite as much as ignorance, was the cause of the startling answer given

by a North-country lad to his inspector during an examination in Grammar.

The Inspector was dealing with the *genders* of nouns and pronouns, and, amongst other questions, he asked :

‘What is the gender of the noun, egg?’

‘Sir,’ answered a tall, shrewd lad behind, who probably surmised that it was a kind of ‘catch’ question, and was determined to prove himself equal to the occasion, ‘you canna tell till it’s hatched!’

The next selection is taken from the essay of a lad in the Third Standard of the school, the subject for composition being *Coals*.

Here is the third paragraph of the lad’s exercise :

‘Be sure also at all times not to waste those coals which your Mother have to work so hard for in washing. For your Mother cant spare more then 3 pence a day out of 2 and 9 pence, with cloths and boots to buy, and the rent, and all that bread and all the herrins which you eat. Be sure and not light the fire till she comes home at night, but keep yourselves warm by playing in the street, or when its wet, running up and down the stares quick. Also blowing hands and jumping.’

Some years ago I had occasion to pay a visit to St. Mary’s College, Hammersmith, a most excellent institution for the training of Roman Catholic students for the office of schoolmaster. Whilst there the following anecdote was related to me by a student.

The worthy master of a poor Catholic school situated in one of the lowest parts of the metropolis, took ‘The Sea’ as the subject of a ‘Friday afternoon’ lesson. In the course of the lesson he asked :

‘What should you think it is, my lads, which makes the sea so salt?’

Presently, a little collarless and shoeless urchin raised his hand and answered :

‘Soldiers an’ bloaters, sir!’

‘Soldiers,’ it appears, is the popular name for red herrings.

During a Scripture lesson from the Book of Kings a teacher, after having gone through the life of the third monarch of the united Jewish kingdom, Solomon, had a further intention of proceeding to the reign of Solomon’s successor, Jeroboam, King of Israel.

Accordingly he put the question :

‘Now, boys, who was it came after Solomon?’

‘The Queen of Sheba, sir!’ cried out an eager little customer, who entertained a lively and delighted recollection of the description of that royal lady’s ‘courtin’.

The following astounding definition was made by a ‘dunce of a boy’ in a London school.

The teacher had been devoting an outline lesson to the productions of Australia, and had dwelt especially upon the marsupial genera, and likewise upon the distinctive singularity of the vegetation. He had also touched upon the peculiar customs of the aborigines. The lads had sat gaping with interested astonishment, while the teacher descanted upon the kangaroo, and its strange manner of rearing and carrying its young; or whilst he described to them the wonders of the V-shaped boomerang, or mentioned the startling facts that most of the trees were evergreen, and that, as regarded certain fruit, the pears were hard and tasteless as marbles, and that the cherries had their stones perking outside the pulp.

The little pupil in question would appear to have become thoroughly bewildered with all that he had heard. Doubtless he had been quite as attentive and interested as the rest of the class, but the poor lad’s judgment had not kept pace with his senses.

At any rate, on the teacher calling upon him to state briefly what the ‘boomerang’ was, he scratched his head, gradually pulled himself together, and replied:

‘The boomerang? Oh yes, sir; the boomerang is a queer-shaped beast what carries all its young in a bag *outside* of its stomach!’

And with this *olla-podrida* of an answer the teacher was compelled to remain satisfied.

During a Scripture lesson upon the early life of Moses a teacher received an answer from a child which was as amusing as it was practical.

The teacher had described how the babe was placed by the sorrowing mother in an ark, and how the little vessel with its precious burden was floated out amongst the reeds on the River Nile, and he then put the question:

‘Now, why did the parents take good care to daub the vessel with pitch?’

And one lad held out his hand, and confidently answered:

‘So as to make the little baby stick inside, sir!’

The next extract is taken from a lad's essay on '*The Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard.*'

The writer first describes how the owner of the vineyard set the greater portion of his servants to work, and he then proceeds:

'But this good old man went out again about the third hour, which was what the Jews called the time of the morning, and he see some men hanging about at the corners like the men as you see. And he said unto them, "O men, what are ye stanning idling round like this here for? Go into my vineyard, and I will give you one penny wages." And behold they went.

'Then a bit later on he went into the markit, and he cried out, "What! more on you stanning idle in the markit place? Do ye not no, Jews, as it is what we say is the nineth hour? Go straigt away into my vineyard, and I will be fair, and give you one penny wages." And behold they went.

'And so the old gentleman kept a going round the streets, finding out all the idle Jews. For he was a real good man.

'But when paying time come, he called them all round him, and he give them all just a penny a peas, wether they had been working long or short. So he did. And then them there men as had been gethering his grapes all day in the skortchin sun started a grumbling at this kind old man, saying as they had done more than a pennerth of work for him, "for look as how weere swettin, sir."

'Then he lifted up his hands and started of them, saying, "O men, did you not go and say as you would gether me grapes all day for one penny? Didnt you?" And the wicked men then see as the old Jew had them, and they cried and said, "Behold yes." But the old gentleman kept it on, and shouted, "Sharnt I do what I like with my own money, idlers? Sharnt I?" And the wickid men came to pass, and said, "O yes, sir," for they was getting a bit frightened. Then the old man got savijer unto them, and he shouted, "Then, behold, all of ye go out of my vineyard quick, and mind, the first of you shall be last, and the last ones first. So out you go sharp." And they went right away with their pennies, sorrering for their deeds. But it taught them a great lesson of thankfullness, which was the heavenly meening of this here parable, for Jesus new more parables then any one except God the Father.'

The following anecdote will tend to show the danger of 'priming' school children for public examination.

A certain dominie of a poor village school out amongst the Lincolnshire wolds had been so upright and so successful in his humble sphere—or, let me whisper it, so wise in his generation—that he had gained the sincere esteem of squire, parson, and yeoman alike. But, alack! the honest pedagogue's golden laurels were, on one miserable and inauspicious day, suddenly torn from his brow and dashed to the ground; or, to put it more appositely, the schoolmaster was assailed by the Evil-one in such a really brazen fashion, that the good man quite forgot for the nonce his 'Get thee behind me, Satan'; and, as the event proved, he had to drink the bitterest gall in consequence of his error. It happened as follows.

One afternoon, just as the scholars were about to be dismissed, the village parson tripped into the school and acquainted the master that he was entertaining an old university friend at the vicarage for a day or two. This friend, he explained, had expressed a desire to visit the school early the next morning, and listen to the master put a few questions to the lads on religious knowledge. The clergyman considerably assured the schoolmaster that his friend's standard of what a religious education should consist in was a very low one, and that, accordingly, the little rustics need only be asked the simplest questions; and he at the same time apologised to the master for giving him such a short notice of his friend's visit.

Then, after the parson had left, that poor Lincolnshire pedagogue was tempted to do a grievous and sinful (or, at least, a very injudicious) thing. Time was short, the little wretches' memories were shorter still, and his own reputation was at stake! Yes, he must adopt a *ruse*, or for ever hide his head in ignominy.

Accordingly he called his little grey-smocked 'first class' before him, arranged the members in a certain order, grafted into each blossoming yokel the particular question he intended to put to him in the morning, and likewise added the correct answer. After priming the young hopefuls over and over again with their respective answers, he ventured to dismiss them.

The morning came, and every member of the 'first class' put in an appearance. As the clergyman and his friend did not enter the school punctually at nine o'clock, the dominie utilised the few spare minutes in setting several of the lads to sharpen slate pencils, dust the pictures, &c. Unfortunately, however, in the hurry of the moment he called upon one of the tall 'first class'

lads to carry out two stone ink-bottles into the back porch, and ordered him to clean off the great streaks of ink and the patches of matted dust.

Shortly afterwards the two visitors walked in, and, after congratulating the master upon the cleanliness and tidiness of the school, &c., they requested that the examination might at once begin. The master, quite forgetting that one of his first class boys was absent in the back yard, commenced to put his questions to the class in the particular order which he had arranged and promised.

Pointing to one boy, he asked :

‘What is that part of you, my lad, which can never die?’

‘My soul, sir,’ smartly replied the rustic, with an air of confidence and decision which was really quite admirable and surprising in one so young.

The visitors nodded their approval, and the dominie continued his interrogations.

‘Now you, my boy,’ he said, pointing to the third boy in the back row, ‘tell us who made you?’

Now the lad thus addressed occupied the very position (third from the end, back row) which had been vacated by the industrious pupil out in the porch. Accordingly, this was not his proper question; and, remembering the master’s positive instructions that he was only to give a certain answer to a certain question, he bravely remained dumb and quiescent.

‘Will you be quick and tell me, sir?’ the master cried out angrily, never dreaming, of course, that any hitch had occurred.

No; the lad never opened his lips or twitched a muscle. Possibly he thought the master was ‘trying it on’ with him.

‘Come, my dear child,’ the visitor ventured to interject, seeing the painful chagrin of the dominie, ‘you should try to give your master some sort of answer. Surely you know, my lad, that it was *God* who made you?’

‘No, sir, it wanna me!’ the lad at last burst forth, ‘I’m sure it wanna, sir! The boy as God made is outside washin’ t’ ink-pots!’

And so that Lincolnshire pedagogue was punished for his grievous delinquency. I draw a veil over the sequel.

I now give a further extract from an essay upon ‘*A ramble in a Park.*’

The class had been told that they might write a description of any holiday ramble they had ever been indulged with, and the

result was that I received exercises headed 'A ramble in the Street,' 'A ramble round the Stalls,' 'A ramble in the country,' &c. &c. I choose this specimen (the concluding paragraph of the essay) because it throws a certain vivid side-light upon a scene which most of us have only witnessed from the stalls or boxes.

'We then got near to some large water. It was very large and still. We sat down upon a seat where there was an old man reading a book, and a young woman asleep. The young woman was very poor. One of her boots was a good one, but the other was not. I picked her bonnet from off the sand, and put it on her shoulder as was sticking up. We then walked about a long time looking at the people in the boats, and follering the swans. Then we went to where there was a lot of rich people riding in carriages, and on the top of horses. I looked most at the boys and girls on their ponies. The boys had nice red faces and big white collars, and nice straight new trowsers without any holes. The girls had got on such a lot of hair, and it tossed up and down and round like as their ponies did. The girls sat with both their legs over one side, and one leg cocked up a bit just reddy for slipping over the reglar way, else jumping off. There was scarcely any noise, except talking and larfing, and the little girls look at you as if they dont hardly know your there. I had a hapenny, but there was nothing to pay, because there was nobody to come round.'

The following extract from an essay on '*The Moon*' affords—in defiance of its title—some most interesting glimpses of sub-lunary home-life.

'To look at the white moon shinin threw your winder at night, sitting on the edge of the bed, and lissnin to your father and mother's knives and forks rattlin on their plates while they are getting their niced suppers, is the prittist site you ever seed. When it's liver and hunyens there a having, you can smell it all the way upstairs. It looks very brite and nearly all white. Once when they was a having Fried fish and potatoes I crept out of my bedroom to the top of the stares all in the dark, just so as to have a better lissen and a nearer smell. I forget weather there was a moon that night. I dont think as there was, cose I got to the top of the stares afore I new I was there, and I tumbled right down to the bottom of the stares, a bursting open the door at the bottom, and rolling into the room nearly as far as the supper table. My father thote of giving me the stick for it, but he let

my mother give me a bit of fish on some bread, and told me to skittle off to bed again. I am sure there was not no moon, else I should have seed there wasnt a top stare when I put my foot out slow. I only skratteed my left eye and ear a bit with that last bump at the bottom, witch was a hard one. Stares are steeper than girls think, speshilly where the corner is.

'Boys who say as the man in the moon was sent there for pickin up sticks on the Sunday, are simpletuns, and dont no nothing about the moon what its like. You should not call them names, but just tell them that what they think is the man's eyes and nose and mouth is only vallys and holes witch you cant say now as the Bible didnt tell you of it. Then if they say to you as the moon is not all them thousands of miles off, else how could the cow jump over it, do not call these poor boys names, else you wood be a cowherd; but just tell them nicely and gently as you never did beleave about that there cow. Tell them as not even race horses could do it, but only hangils, and they will beleave you, and thank you for making them wiser every day. If these simpletuns say to you as they do not beleave that the moon is round, cose what about its getting smaller and smaller and shapin itself difrent; just tell them as it is all along of spinnin round like, thats all, and they will beleave you, and say thank you for all that you have told them.

'Everything about the moon is true, so mind and stick to it, witch you will be rewarded for, and not be fritened of lying down on your death bed.'

The extract which follows is the latter portion of a Third Standard lad's essay on '*Cleanliness*.'

'Then do not go and say that you are feared of making yourself clean, just becose it is cold and it hurts to get the dirt off, or becose the suds get in your eye. For when you are clean, people do not edge away from you, never mind about your clothes, but they say unto you like our teacher that it is next to godlyness. Be thankful unto him becose your mothers can afford soap, and becose they make you use it. Also when your mother puts her finger down your coat-neck afore breakfast, and peeps to see if there's any black there, and then sends you back to the sink again to wash yourself better, say unto her, yes mother, also smiling. On Saturday nights say also unto her, mother dont forget to get my bath-tub reddy for me, and a new peace of soap, for I love to wash myself count of cleanliness for it is next to godlyness. Do not be same as them there Blacks, and

Amerikens, and Ingoos, which just splashes their faces with water and no soap, and never gets inside of a tub, only paddlin about bits of rivers.

‘When you say to a dirty boy “Dirty Dick wants the stick,” only say it about once, so as he cant say as you are wickid. Say unto him, look at the thoteful cat, which spits on its pores just to get a bit of lather for a fair start, and then wipes its nose, and into its eyes, also behind its ears, not counting over. Then say unto him as it will actshelly lick itself where it cant get its pores, rather than be hitching anywheres round. Tell him to look at the necks of masters and superintendents and preachers, and he will never find a ring, which is allways a sine as you have not gone far down.’

HENRY J. BARKER.

Cap d'Antibes.

I SUPPOSE it will at once be readily conceded by every candid and intelligent mind that Cannes itself, as apart from its surroundings, is about the most unpleasant and uncongenial place to live in anywhere on the surface of God's universe. It is the avatar of plutocracy; the incarnation of the league between the kingdoms that be; the chosen spot where principalities and powers, dukes and cotton-spinners, have raised their meretricious villas aloft, before the face of high heaven, with coquettish monstrosities, to bask in the sunshine of one another's presence. Here capitalism and landlordism 'their children have gathered, their city have built,' and built it, apparently, with Rococo, Baroque, and Co. for their architects and decorators. And here the universal snobdom of cosmopolitan Europe has followed close on their heels in a hundred hostelrys. The people who like to know grand dukes lie thick at Cannes as leaves in Vallombrosa. You can watch them walking along the pavement with a firmer tread, like good King Stanislas's page in good King Stanislas's footsteps, blandly conscious that those self-same flags on the Rue d'Antibes have just resounded to the ring of royal heels, or felt the soft pressure of Serene Highness's Parisian *bottines*. To them their own joy: to us, the red pinnaced peaks and free porphyry crags of the jagged Esterels.

For I was careful to say above, with due reservation, 'apart from its surroundings.' I suppose every candid and intelligent mind will also admit—and when one says that, who will venture to deny it?—that, viewed as a site, apart from the vulgar herd of plutocrats who have swarmed to defile it, the Bay of Cannes is one of the loveliest and most gracious spots on this terraqueous planet. When Brougham first stayed his wandering wheels at the Old Town, Cannes must have been the gem of the Riviera. And that is just the worst of that too-populous coast: these lovely nooks have always been seized upon by the wealthy and tasteless

for their experiments in the science of comparative uglification. Now, there really seems no sufficient reason why the devil should have all the prettiest sites, any more than he should have all the best tunes. There's Monte Carlo, for instance, a Paradise, if it were not a Hell: the most beautiful corner, to my mind, on the round Mediterranean. Thinking thus, it was a delight to me in the annual course of winter exile to discover the Cap d'Antibes, and to find a place where the Bay of Cannes and the Esterel could be duly enjoyed in peace and quietness, among cultured society, without risk of the intrusion of grand-ducal flunkeys.

Now of course I don't mean to put forward the Cap d'Antibes precisely in the light of an original discovery. The Geographical Society need decree the intrepid explorer no bronze medal. It is there in evidence, very much in evidence, from Cannes on one side and from Nice on the other; a long low spit of land, one would say, projecting far into the sea, and looking about as uninteresting from a distance, with its dim flat outline, as—well—Selsea Bill from the King's Road at Brighton. That's just the reason why it is still possible for the intelligent tourist to practically discover it. Dozens of times one may pass up and down that familiar bit of railway line between Cannes, Nice, Mentone, and San Remo—the common track of the common tourist—without ever even dreaming of turning aside from one's route to explore that seemingly dull and monotonous headland. You would think beforehand there was absolutely nothing of interest to repay the *détour*: only a long flat expanse of land in the immediate neighbourhood of much more beautiful and mountainous scenery.

When you actually reach the Cape, however, on exploration bent, you are surprised to find yourself face to face with the most glorious views on the whole Riviera. It is Switzerland-on-Sea; that's the only name I can find quite fit to describe it. The transformation scene is as extraordinary as any in Mr. Augustus Harris's Drury Lane pantomimes. The low flat promontory disappears altogether on nearer view, or rather, becomes a mere platform from which you look round, north, south, east, west, upon the circular panorama of sea and mountains. On the one hand, you have the Golfe Jouan and the Bay of Cannes, intersected by the pretty little spit of the Croisette, diversified by the islands of Ste. Marguerite and St. Honorat, and bounded in the distance by the wonderful outline of the beloved Esterels. 'Well, that,' you say, 'one can see anywhere from the Californie Hill.' Ah,

yes, but wait a minute. On the other hand, you have in the very same *coup d'œil* the Bay of Nice, and the Villefranche point, and Monaco and Monte Carlo, and the Mentone Hills, and, away to the east, the white gleaming houses of Bordighera rejoicing in the sun on their distant headland. 'And all that,' you answer, 'one can look at any day from various spots about Beaulieu or the Corniche.' Ah, yes; right you are: but wait again. Besides the wonderful combination of those two exquisite bays in a single peep, curving round to right and left, there's another point in the scenery which you can get nowhere else along the whole Provençal coast except here at Cap d'Antibes—another point which carries you away at once to Meiringen or Mürren. Backing up the whole rich picture, with its infinite variety of hill and town and bay and sea, you raise your eyes suddenly to the snow-clad summits of the Maritime Alps, glittering white with their virginal sheet in the Mediterranean sunshine; and there you see them for a hundred miles together, clear cut and cloudless against the Italian sky, pale blue with shadow in the early morning, or rose-pink with the after-glow on sunset evenings.

It is the Riviera and the Bernese Oberland rolled into one. Beat that if you can for December and January.

On Christmas Day, if you like, you can picnic in the open air on the little mountain summit of Notre Dame de la Garoupe (of which 'more anon'), and look down upon smiling bays, and basking towns, and rose-clad villas, or up to the eternal snows of the Cime di Mercantourn and the Col di Tenda, according to taste; with the flowery bowery gardens of Nice and Cannes for your nearer foreground, and the great icy peaks of the French and Italian Alps closing your view northward with their maiden snow-fields. Till I went to Cap d'Antibes myself (after many winters' sojourn on the Provençal coast) I had no idea anything like such grand and Alpine scenery was to be found along the always beautiful but usually restricted Riviera ledge: certainly I should never have dreamt of looking for it on that long low spit that divides the bays of Nice and Golfe Jouan.

The fact is, everywhere else along the Riviera the lower mountains of the sea-coast range, rising steep and sheer above the ledge-like shore, cut off entirely the view of the great Alpine giants that rise inland to ten thousand feet behind them. Here and there, to be sure, as at the mouth of the Var, on the Castle Hill at Nice, or up the valleys of the Roya and Nervia torrents near Ventimiglia, one catches through some gap of the nearer

mountains a glorious glimpse of the huge snow-clad range that lies sleeping beyond. But it is only a glimpse. At Cap d'Antibes alone, the whole long panorama of the Maritime Alps unfolds itself at once in its full glory, like the Monte Rosa chain seen from the Varese platform, or the Pyrenees from the Castle terrace at Pau. There alone can you get so far out to seaward that the lesser mountains of the foreground cease to hide with their bare and fantastic rocks the immeasurable calm of the great icy summits.

How does it happen, then, that so exceptionally favoured a spot, lying within sight of Nice and Cannes themselves, should be so little known to the vast race of tourists? The answer, I think, must be, because it is so little known. If once visited, it is sure of a return. But I doubt not most people pass it by, as I did myself, winter after winter, without an idea of how fundamentally it differs in its varied attractions from the rest of the somewhat monotonous and always over-crowded Rivieran winter resorts.

The way to get to Cap d'Antibes is by the Antibes station on the old familiar (and hateful) Paris, Lyon, Méditerranée. (I have always thought it the most powerful argument in favour of future punishment that one can hardly believe the directors of that wicked line will get off in the end scot-free.) Everybody knows the picturesque appearance of Antibes town, with its harbour and lighthouse, and its mouldering walls, as seen from the railway *en route* for Nice. But that charming view, quaint and old-world as it is, is yet by no means the best to be obtained of the ancient Phocæan city. In fact, if I were not engaged in writing an article about the Cape, I should be tempted to turn aside for a dozen pages or so to write an article about Antibes itself, so full of interest is that beautiful old Greek colony. It still stands surrounded by its bristling fortifications, the work of Vauban, pierced by narrow gates, and topped with fine ramparts. The Fort-Carré that crowns its seaward promontory, the rocky islets, and the two moles of the harbour (like a small-scale Genoa), all add to the picturesque effect of the situation and prospect. Within, the town is as quaint as without, poor in memorials of the original Antipolis, but rich in Roman remains, including that famous and pathetic inscription to the boy Septentrio, QVI ANTIPOLI IN THEATRO BIDVO SALTAVIT ET PLACVIT. The general aspect of the place, however, is mediæval, or even seventeenth-century; and a flavour of Vauban pervades the whole

town, with its obtrusive military air of a border fortress. For of course, while the Var was the boundary between France and Italy, Antibes was necessarily a strategic post of immense importance.

The inquiring mind bound for the Cape, however, leaves this Antibes town entirely to the left, and, skirting its grey walls and sharp angular bastions, proceeds by a beautiful coastwise road, round tiny bays and mimic headlands, along the promontory of the Garoupe. A drive of about three or four miles through charming country, hoary with olives, green with holm-oaks, brings one at last to the Hotel du Cap, on the whole perhaps the pleasantest and most home-like house to stop in anywhere on the Riviera. Here, the views either way are simply unsurpassed. North and south, east and west, boxing the compass of admiration, they are all beautiful. The front looks out upon the bay and the islands, with the Esterel in the distance; the back sweeps at a single view the whole range of the Maritime Alps. The sea prospect alone is far more extensive than at Cannes, for not only does one see the nearer porphyritic peaks from Agay to St. Raphael, but also, beyond, in the direction of St. Tropez, the Montagnes des Maures jut out in the background—those dim blue mountains which derive their romantic modern name from the Saracen garrison of the Garde Freinet, who held them as an intrusive fragment of Islam, wedged into the very heart of Christendom, through the troublous times of the ninth and tenth centuries.

But the great point of the Cape is its quiet peacefulness, its rugged cliff scenery, and its endless resources of country rambles. Seen from afar, indeed, the promontory appears to be long and low; and so it is when compared with the mountain country behind it; but when you actually get upon that jutting point, you find it is really a worn mountain stump, rocky and jagged, and ending towards the sea in beautiful honeycombed cliffs and rugged islets. It is very peninsular in tone. The coast scenery closely resembles that of the Lizard in Cornwall, with occasional reminiscences of Coboe Bay in Guernsey, or of the broken stacks and pinnacles round the harbour of Holyhead. A North African flora flourishes on the sun-baked surface; and a *succursale* of the Jardin des Plantes at Paris, ably presided over by that well-known *savant* M. Naudin, grows sub-tropical plants by the hundred in a sheltered valley near the middle of the peninsula. The exact southern point of the Cape itself is occupied by the exquisite grounds of the Villa Eilen-roc, the property of an

English gentleman, who, though rich, is not churlish, but, with generous recognition of the duties of landed proprietorship, permits all well-behaved persons the use of the paths and roadways of the estate at any reasonable hour of the morning or evening. There you may wander alone, at your own sweet will, after the mere formality of inscribing your name in a visitors' book, along steep cliff-paths that mount and descend a hundred times beside tiny blue bays, or deep limestone caves, or precipitous gorges worn by the waves in the solid rock, where clear emerald-green masses of water shatter themselves at last in white curd-like foam against the immovable bases of the eternal crags. Beyond, tall pinnacles and needles of rock rise sheer from the sea, their crannied clefts gay with hardy sprigs of rue and rosemary, and their summits crowned by long trailing sprays of self-sown mesembryanthemum. When the great purple flowers open their round discs to the midday sun, and the music of the breakers resounds from the beaten walls below, one could sit there for ever in the southern sunshine, and forget entirely the bare existence of fog and strikes and school boards in London.

Not that this charming spot has been spoiled in any way by the obtrusive and tasteless additions of that enemy of his race, the landscape gardener. Here the *numen aquæ* has never yet been driven from his native haunts by the ungraceful abominations of set paths or terraces. All that has been done is just to render the various points of view barely accessible by the roughest and most natural of zigzag foot-tracks, or by rude steps just cut into the face of the precipitous limestone. What little has been added in the way of decoration has been to let the wild winds themselves carry flower-seeds on their wings to the spots where they could root in the reft rock-sides and pinnacles.

Elsewhere round the promontory the coast paths are also delicious, though nowhere quite so romantic as at the Villa Eilen-roc. Just in front of the hotel, which stands alone almost in the midst of woods, far from the busy haunts of men, a little minor wind-swept promontory projects into the sea, known as the Plan de l'Islette. It is itself a bare and miniature copy of the main peninsula, joined to the mainland by a mimic isthmus some thirty yards wide, and cut up into endless bays and capes by the ceaseless dashing of those great curled white breakers. Its surface consists of naked white limestone, worn and honeycombed like tufa by the angry spray; yet so varied is its outline that while one side or other is always exposed to the beating waves,

whatever way the wind blows, there is yet always somewhere a calm little haven, well sheltered from the breeze, where the fishermen can moor their boats for the time being, and the boys can sit on the ledges, with their legs dangling over, and angle for bream or for strange jelly-like sea-fruit in the still, clear water.

That is just the main charm of the Cap d'Antibes. The greater part of the surface is still unenclosed, and devious coast paths entice one to ramble by lonely routes, past endless tiny bays, and round interminable headlands. Sometimes the track leads one through fresh-scented pine-woods, starred thickly underfoot with the pretty purple and white anemones. Sometimes it threads the olive groves and orange gardens, where stars of Bethlehem and violets carpet the red soil, and green tree-frogs lurk and croak among the foliage of the myrtles. Sometimes it passes between tangled brakes of lentisk and juniper, where the locusts fly out whirring at every footfall, where the shagreened lizards dart in wild alarm across the tortuous path at the sound of man's approach, and where the voice of the cicada and the rustle of the genista leaves make music for the march of the processional caterpillars. Of course, if your ideal of life is to exchange the latest scandal with the *flâneurs* of the Réunion, or to discuss the dubious occupants of the light victorias that whirl beside the clipped palms of the Promenade des Anglais, you won't be enchanted with these simple joys of the Cap d'Antibes. But if you care little for the artistic adornment of the human cheek, or the artificial elevation of the human heel, and love rather wild flowers, blue bays, white rocks, and floating jelly-fish, then by all means go to the Grand Hotel du Cap for spring or autumn.

The culminating point and most panoramic platform of the entire peninsula, however, is the pilgrimage hill of La Garoupe, crowned by the white lighthouse and the still whiter oratory of Notre Dame de la Garde, that tutelary patroness of all the faithful among Provençal fishermen. Though only a little over three hundred feet high, La Garoupe, like the Lighthouse Hill at Cromer, is none the less a veritable mountain. Indeed it is even more of a mountain in a way than that mighty East Anglian peak (since height in feet I hold to be a vulgar mode of measurement), for it consists entirely of rugged weather-worn limestone, jutting out at an acute tilt along the slope in little crags and clatters, while its summit is composed of a veritable tor, whose greater asperities have been cut down or worn smooth by age and wor-

shippers, to form a platform for the reception of the chapel and lighthouse. Here, from time immemorial, must have stood the antique High Place of the native Ligurian cult, slowly superseded by the extramural temple of the Phocæan Antipolitans, and the Christian shrine of mediæval Provençal mariners. Here, too, the beacon-fire on the pharos must always have flared to guide the lateen-sailed vessels into the landlocked harbour of the town of Antibes. A curious and very perfect Chemin de la Croix, adorned by an unusually fine series of whitewashed oratories, leads up by zigzag steps, under the shadow of pines and evergreen oaks, from the town below to the High Place on the hill-top. It is paved at present with cobble-stones, and marked out with kerbs; but long before Notre Dame, Stella Maris, ousted the Dioscuri, *lucida sidera*, from their Hellenic seat, the naked heels of still earlier Ligurian seamen must have worn that path deep in the solid limestone rock of the jagged hill-side, on their way up to the altar of some yet more ancient and long-forgotten goddess. Faiths change, speech alters, but the Holy Place remains holy for ever. That forms to my mind the great charm of the Mediterranean littoral; everywhere on the shores of the inland sea the roots of things push so far back into the remote past that one stands face to face at every turn with Phœnician and Carthaginian, and the shy Iberian traffickers of Matthew Arnold's immortal description.

From the top of the pilgrimage hill the view is undeniably one of the finest in Europe. It might almost compare with the Rigi on a clear day, or even with the Appuldurcombe monument in the Isle of Wight (I rise superior once more to the foot-rule standard). Northward you look down upon the narrow isthmus that joins the Garoupe peninsula to the mainland, impinged upon on either side by two sweeping blue bays, each rich in turn with grey towns and white villages. Grey Antibes itself, with its fortifications and harbour spread map-like before one's eyes, occupies the foreground, and oh, how different in scenic effect those varied Vaubanesque angles, and embrasures, and bastions, from the low flat works of our more scientific modern military engineering! The villa at our feet belongs to Meissonier; in the yacht by the island, Guy de Maupassant lolls *Sur l'Eau*, and paints more word-pictures. Beyond, among the first slopes of the olive-clad mountains, Biot, and Cagnes, and Grasse, and Vence, and a dozen more crowded little Provençal towns, gleam white upon their hill-tops, while the Château of Villeneuve-Loubet frowns down upon the Loup, and St. Laurent guards the more distant Var valley. That long line of

houses marks the promenade at Nice, and the Castle Hill and Old Town succeed to westward; then Smith's Folly and the Villefranche point; and after them the familiar bluff of the Tête de Chien above Monaco, with the Roman tower of Turbia just silhouetted dark against the morning sky; while last of all rise the further Italian Alps, closed up in the distance by the Bordighera palm groves and the steep fronts of the Capo Nero and the Capo Verde, that hem in San Remo. Westward, the eye ranges over the Iles de Lérins, Cannes, the Golfe Jouan, and the purple Esterel; the unpeopled solitude of the pine-clad mountains of the distance on this side contrasting finely with the endless villages and towns of the eastward view. Behind all stand the Alps, silent and shimmering, covered thicker and deeper with new-fallen snow in winter here than one ever sees them in July and August in Switzerland. And then, when you turn southward, the peninsula itself glides off by innumerable points into the blue Mediterranean, with the squadron steaming rapidly round in long procession—ungainly monsters of the deep, on their way from the Rade de Villefranche to their favourite roadstead under the lee of Ste. Marguerite. So magnificent a combination of snow-clad mountain and gracious smiling coast it would be hard to match. We went up to the chapel almost every day of our stay at Cap d'Antibes, and always with undiminished admiration and pleasure.

One last word to guard against the eternal foolish parrot-cry of Why proclaim it? Having found out Antibes, why not keep it to yourself as a private treasure? Well, in the first place, there isn't the very slightest danger that the wrong sort of people will ever go to ruralise on the end of the point. There's nothing to draw them. They will much prefer Cannes, Nice, and Monte Carlo. It's nonsense to talk about all the nice places getting overrun. The vast mass even of the British Isles still consists of unbroken solitudes. But, further, in the second place, one must always remember that along the Riviera no place is habitable for English folk until it has been properly exploited. There are nestling seaward nooks by the dozen along the lovely shore between Toulon and St. Raphael (I know them all), far better adapted by nature for winter resorts than any of the open wind-swept towns which occupy the mouths of torrent valleys (like Nice and Mentone), and to which alone invalids can now be consigned in ship-loads by impatient London doctors. But then, these spots have not yet been rendered habitable for English guests. There is no hotel; there are no villas; drainage is un-

known; communications are non-existent; you can't get butchers' meat, or Huntley and Palmer's biscuits, or a pound of tea, or a match that will strike, or any other common necessary of life, as conceived by the luxurious modern Caractacus in his cottage in Britain. The Riviera, in fact, in its unsophisticated state, grows only two things—olive oil and sour claret. It is grassless and cowless; its only milk is goat's; its only mutton tastes suspiciously hircine. In the towns all food is imported from afar: the butter comes from Milan and the Lombard plain; the chickens from Toulouse; the beef and mutton from the Loire valley. An Englishman could no more settle down at Bormes or Cavalaire, for example—ideal health resorts as they are—to shift for himself, than he could settle down in New Guinea or on a Pacific islet.

Therefore, one must needs go to Provence where hotels exist and supplies are organised. Now the hotel at Cap d'Antibes is one of the best-managed and most home-like on the Provençal coast; and as it is naturally frequented only by those foolish souls who prefer the country to *trente et quarante*, and wild lilies to the *Bataille des Fleurs*, they are likely to meet there with congenial society. But of course it can only continue to exist if the right sort of people are aware of its existence. I ought further to add as a final precaution—Cap d'Antibes is not the place for consumptives in an advanced stage of tubercular disease, nor for any indeed save the sturdy invalid who can walk well and doesn't object to a touch of mistral. If a wholesome north wind nips up the blood in your veins, you had better stick to Mentone, or to Mustapha Supérieur, or to Catania, or to Luxor. But if all that you want is dry rock to sit upon and the luxury of sunshine, you can get them to perfection here at Cap d'Antibes.

GRANT ALLEN.

Rizzio to Mary Stuart.

I.

Serenade.

LADY, lady of my thought,
 See I kneel before thee,
 Count my love and service naught,
 Still I must adore thee.

Queen, my Queen, look down on me,
 Far, so far above me,
 Put this martyr's crown on me,
She can never love me.

Mary, dear one, were it mine
 These bonds to sever,
 I would rather stay and pine
 Thy servant ever.

II.

Chorus

With mandolin accompaniment.

Let our song be bright and gay,
 Care and grief have naught to say,
 All the world is fair as May
 For our Lady Queen to-day.

Think no more of what has been,
 Sunlight dances on the green,
 Never Holyrood has seen
 Day more fit for such a Queen.

WALTER HERRIES POLLOCK.

The Good Little Girl.

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

HER name was Priscilla Prodgers, and she was a very good little girl indeed. So good was she, in fact, that she could not help being aware of it herself; and that is a stage to which very many quite excellent persons never succeed in attaining. She was only just a child, it is true, but she had read a great many beautiful story-books, and so she knew what a powerful reforming influence a childish and innocent remark, or a youthful example, or a happy combination of both, can exert over grown-up people. And early in life—she was but eleven at the date of this true history—early in life she had seen clearly that her mission was to reform her family and relatives generally. This was a heavy task for one so young, particularly in Priscilla's case, for besides a father, mother, brother, and sister, in whom she could not but discern many and serious failings, she possessed an aunt who was addicted to insincerity, two female cousins whose selfishness and unamiability were painful to witness, and a male cousin who talked slang and was so worldly that he habitually went about in yellow boots! Nevertheless, Priscilla did not flinch, although, for some reason, her earnest and unremitting efforts had hitherto failed to produce any deep impression. At times she thought this was owing to the fact that she tried to reform all her family together, and that her best plan would be to take each one separately, and devote her whole energies to improving that person alone. But then she never could make up her mind which member of the family to begin with. It is small wonder that she often felt a little disheartened; but even that was a cheering symptom, for in the books it is generally just when the little heroine becomes most discouraged that the seemingly impenitent relative exhibits the first sign of softening.

So Priscilla persevered: sometimes with merely a shocked glance of disapproval, which she had practised before the looking-glass until she could do it perfectly, sometimes with some tender, tactful little hint. 'Don't you think, dear papa,' she would say softly, on a Sunday morning, 'don't you *think* you could write your newspaper article on some *other* day? Is it a work of *real* necessity?' Or she would ask her mother, who was certainly fond of wearing pretty things, 'How much bread for poor, starving people would the price of your new bonnet buy, mother? I should so like to work it out on my little slate!'

Then she would remind her brother Alick that it would be so much better if, instead of wasting his time in playing with silly little tin soldiers, he would try to learn as much as he could before he was sent to school; while she was never tired of quoting to her sister Betty the line—

Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever!

which Betty, quite unjustly, interpreted to mean that Priscilla thought but poorly of her sister's intellectual capacity.

Once when, as a great treat, the children were allowed to read 'Ivanhoe' aloud, Priscilla declined to participate until she had conscientiously read up the whole Norman period in her English History; and on another occasion she cried bitterly on hearing that her mother had arranged for them to learn dancing, and even endured bread and water for an entire day, rather than consent to acquire an accomplishment which she feared, from what she had read, would prove a snare. On the second day—well, there was roast beef and Yorkshire pudding for dinner, and Priscilla yielded; but she made the resolution—and kept it, too—that, if she went to the dancing-class, she would firmly refuse to take the slightest pains to learn a single step.

I only mention all these traits to show that Priscilla really was an unusually good child, which makes it the more sad and strange that her family should have profited so little by her example. She was neither loved nor respected as she ought to have been, I am grieved to say. Her papa, when he was not angry, made the cruellest fun of her mild reproofs; her mother continued to spend money on dresses and bonnets, and even allowed the maid to say that her mistress was 'not at home,' when she was merely unwilling to receive visitors. Alick and Betty, too, only grew more exasperated when Priscilla urged them to keep their tempers, and altogether she could not help feeling how wasted and thrown away she was in such a circle.

But she never quite lost heart. Her papa was a literary man, and wrote tales, some of which she feared were not as true as they affected to be, while he invariably neglected to insert a moral in any of them. Frequently she dropped little remarks before him with apparent carelessness, in the hope that he might put them in print, but he never did; she never could recognise herself as a character in any of his stories, and so at last she gave up reading them at all!

But one morning she came more near to giving up in utter despair than ever before. Only the previous day she had been so hopeful! Her father had really seemed to be beginning to appreciate his little daughter, and had presented her with sixpence in the new coinage to put in her money-box. This had emboldened her to such a degree that, happening on the following morning to hear him ejaculate, 'Confound it!' she had, pressing one hand to her beating heart and laying the other hand softly upon his shoulder (which is the proper attitude on these occasions), reminded him that such an expression was scarcely less reprehensible than actual bad language. Upon which her hard-hearted papa had told her, almost sharply, '*not to be a little prig!*'

Priscilla forgave him, of course, and freely, because he was her father and it was her duty to bear with him, but she felt the injustice deeply for all that. Then, when she went up into the nursery, Alick and Betty made a frantic uproar merely because she insisted on teaching them the moves in chess when they perversely preferred Reversi! So, feeling baffled and sick at heart, she had put on her hat and run out all alone to a quiet lane near her home, where she could soothe her troubled mind by thinking over the ingratitude and lack of appreciation with which her efforts were so continually met.

She had not gone very far up the lane when she saw, seated on a bench, a bent old woman in a poke-bonnet, with a crutch-handled stick in her hands, and this old woman Priscilla (who was very quick of observation) instantly guessed to be a fairy—in which, as it fell out, she was perfectly right.

'Good-day, my pretty child,' croaked the old dame.

'Good-day to you, ma'am,' answered Priscilla, politely, for she knew that it was not only right, but prudent, to be civil to fairies, particularly when they take the form of old women. 'But, if you please, you mustn't call me pretty—because I am not. At least,' she added, for she prided herself upon her truthfulness, '*not exactly pretty.* And I should hate to be always thinking about

my looks, like poor Milly—she's our housemaid, you know—and I so often have to tell her that she did not make her *own* face.'

'I don't alarm you, I see,' said the old crone; 'but possibly you're not aware that you're talking to a fairy?'

'Oh yes, I am; but I'm not a bit afraid, because, you see, fairies can only hurt *bad* children.'

'Ah! and you're a good little child—that's not difficult to see!'

'They don't see it at home,' said Priscilla, with a sad little sigh, 'or they would listen more when I tell them of things they oughtn't to do.'

'And what things do they do that they oughtn't to, my child—if you don't mind telling me?'

'Oh! I don't mind in the *least*,' Priscilla hastened to assure her; and then she told the old woman all her family's faults, and the trial it was to bear with them and go on trying to induce them to mend their ways. 'And papa is getting worse than ever,' she concluded dolefully. 'Only fancy, this very morning he called me a little prig!'

'Tut-tut!' said the fairy, sympathetically; 'deary-deary me! So he called you *that*, did he? "A little prig!" And *you*, too! Ah! the world's coming to a pretty pass! I suppose, now, your papa and the rest of them have got it into their heads that you are too young and too inexperienced to set up as their adviser—is that it?'

'I'm afraid so,' admitted Priscilla. 'But we mustn't blame them,' she added gently; 'we must remember that they don't know any better—mustn't we, ma'am?'

'You sweet child!' said the old lady, with enthusiasm; 'I must see if I can't do something to help you, though I'm not the fairy I used to be. Still, there are tricks I can manage still, if I'm put to it. What you want is something that will prove to them that they ought to pay more attention to you, eh?—something there can be no possible mistake about?'

'Yes!' cried Priscilla, eagerly; 'and—and—how would it be if you changed them into something else, just to *show* them; and then I could ask for them to be transformed back again, you know?'

'What an ingenious little thing you are!' exclaimed the fairy; 'but let us see: if you came home and found your cruel papa doing duty as the family hat-stand, or strutting about as a Cochinchina fowl——'

'Oh, *yes*; and I'd feed him every day, till he was sorry,' interrupted the warm-hearted little girl, impulsively.

'Ah! but you're so hasty, my dear. Who would write all the clever articles and tales to earn bread and meat for you all? Fowls can't use a pen. No; we must find a prettier trick than that. There *was* one I seem to remember, long, long ago, performing for a good little ill-used girl, just like you, my dearie, just like you! Now, what was it? Some gift I gave her whenever she opened her lips——'

'Why, I remember—how funny that you should have forgotten! Whenever she opened her lips, roses and diamonds and rubies fell out. That would be the very thing! Then they'd *have* to attend to me! Oh! do be a kind old fairy, and give me a gift like that—do, *do*!'

'Now, don't be so impetuous! You forget that this is not the time of year for roses; and as for jewels—well, I don't think I can be very far wrong in supposing that you open your lips pretty frequently in the course of the day?'

'Alick does call me a "mag,"' said Priscilla; 'but that's wrong, because I never speak without having something to say. I don't think people ought to—it may do so *much* harm, mayn't it?'

'Undoubtedly. But, anyhow, if we made it *every* time you opened your lips, you would soon ruin me in precious stones—that's plain! No; I think we had better say that the jewels shall only drop when you are saying something you wish to be particularly improving—how will that do?'

'Very nicely indeed, ma'am, thank you,' said Priscilla, 'because, you see, it comes to just the same thing.'

'Ah, well, try to be as economical of your good things as you can. Remember that in these hard times a poor old fairy's riches are not as inexhaustible as they used to be.'

'And jewels really will drop out?'

'Whenever they are wanted to "point a moral and adorn a tale,"' said the old woman, who, for a fairy, was particularly well-read. 'There, run along home, do, and scatter your pearls before your relations.'

It need scarcely be said that Priscilla was only too willing to obey; she ran all the way home with a light heart, eager to exhibit her wonderful gift. 'How surprised they will be!' she was thinking. 'If it had been Betty instead of me, I suppose she would have come back talking toads. It would have been a good lesson for her; but still, toads are nasty things, and it would

have been rather unpleasant for the rest of us. I think I won't tell Betty *where* I met the fairy.'

She came in and took her place demurely at the family luncheon, which was the children's dinner; they were all seated already, including her father, who had got through most of his writing in the course of the morning.

'Now, make haste, and eat your dinner, Priscilla,' said her mother, 'or it will be quite cold.'

'I always let it get a little cold, mother,' replied the good little girl, 'so that I mayn't come to think too much about eating, you know.'

As she uttered this remark she felt a jewel producing itself in some mysterious way from the tip of her tongue, and saw it fall with a clatter into her plate. 'I'll pretend not to notice anything,' she thought.

'Hullo!' exclaimed Alick, pausing in the act of mastication. 'I say, *Prissie*!'

'If you ask mother, I'm sure she will tell you that it is most ill-mannered to speak with your mouth full,' said Priscilla, her speech greatly impeded by an immense emerald.

'I like that!' exclaimed her rude brother. 'Who's speaking with their mouth full *now*?'

"*Their*" is not grammar, dear,' was Priscilla's only reply to this taunt, as she delicately ejected a pearl; 'you should say *her* mouth full.' For Priscilla's grammar was as good as her principles.

'But, really, Priscilla, dear,' said her mother, who felt some embarrassment at so novel an experience as being obliged to find fault with her little daughter; 'you should not eat sweets just before dinner; and—and couldn't you get rid of them in some other manner?'

'Sweets!' cried Priscilla, considerably annoyed at being so misunderstood. 'They are not *sweets*, mother—look.' And she offered to submit one for inspection.

'If I may venture to express an opinion,' observed her father, 'I would rather that a child of mine should suck sweets than coloured beads; and, in either case, I object to having them prominently forced upon my notice at meal-times. But I dare say I'm wrong. I generally am.'

'Papa is quite right, dear,' said her mother; 'it *is* such a dangerous habit. Suppose you were to swallow one, you know. Put them in the fire, like a good girl, and go on with your dinner.'

Priscilla rose without a word, her cheeks crimsoning, and dropped the pearl, ruby, and emerald with great accuracy into the very centre of the fire. This done, she returned to her seat and went on with her dinner in silence, though her feelings prevented her from eating very much.

‘If they choose to think my jewels are only beads, or jujubes, or acidulated drops,’ she said to herself bitterly, ‘I won’t waste any more on them, that’s all! I won’t open my lips again except to say quite ordinary things—so *there!*’

If Priscilla had not been such a very good little girl, you might almost have thought she was in a temper; but she was not—her feelings were wounded, that was all, which is quite a different thing.

That afternoon her Aunt Margarine, Mrs. Hoyle, came to call. She was the aunt whom we have already mentioned as being given to insincerity; she was not well off, and had a tendency to flatter people, but Priscilla was fond of her, notwithstanding, and she had never detected her in any insincerity towards herself. She was sent into the drawing-room to entertain her aunt until her mother was ready to come down, and her aunt, as usual, overwhelmed her with affectionate admiration. ‘How pretty and well you are looking, my pet,’ she began; ‘and, oh! what a beautiful frock you have on!’

‘The little silkworms wore it before I did, aunt,’ said Priscilla modestly.

‘How sweet of you to say so! but they never looked half so well in it, I’ll be bou—— Why, my child, you’ve dropped a stone out of a brooch or something—look—on the carpet there!’

‘Oh!’ said Priscilla, carelessly, ‘it was out of my mouth, not out of a brooch. I never wear jewellery. I think jewellery makes people grow so conceited, don’t *you*, Aunt Margarine?’

‘Yes, indeed, dearest; indeed, you are *so* right,’ said her aunt (who wore a cameo brooch as large as a tart upon her cloak); ‘and—and surely that can’t be a *diamond* in your lap?’

‘Oh, yes, it is. I met a fairy this morning in the lane, and so——’ and here Priscilla proceeded to narrate her wonderful experience. ‘I thought it might perhaps make papa and mamma value me a little more than they do,’ she said wistfully, as she finished her story; ‘but they don’t take the least notice; they made me put the jewels on the fire—they did, really.’

‘What blindness!’ cried her aunt; ‘how *can* people shut their eyes to such a treasure? And—and may I just have *one*

look? What! you really don't want them? I may keep them for my very own? You precious love! Ah, *I* know a humble home where you would be appreciated at your proper worth. What would I not give for my poor naughty Bell and Cathie to have the advantage of seeing more of such a cousin!

'I don't know whether I could do them much good,' said Priscilla, 'but I would try my best.'

'I am sure you would,' said Aunt Margarine; 'and now, dearest sweet, I am going to ask your dear mamma to spare you to us for just a little while—we must both beg very hard.'

'I'll go and tell nurse to pack my things now, and then I can go away with you,' said the little girl.

When her mother heard of the invitation, she consented quite willingly. 'To tell you the truth, Margarine,' she said, 'I shall be very glad for the child to have a change. She seems a little unhappy at home with us, and she behaved most unlike her usual self at lunch; it *can't* be natural for a child of her age to chew large glass beads. Did your Cathie and Belle ever do such a thing?'

'Never,' said Aunt Margarine, coughing; 'it is a habit that certainly ought to be checked, and I promise you, my dear Lucy, that if you will only trust Priscilla to me, I will take away anything of that kind the very moment I find it. And I do think, poor as we are, we shall manage to make her feel at home. We are all so fond of your sweet Priscilla.'

So the end of it was that Priscilla went to stay with her aunt that very afternoon, and her family bore the parting with the greatest composure.

'I can't give you nice food or a pretty bedroom to sleep in, such as you have at home,' said her kind aunt. 'We are very plain people, my pet, but at least we can promise you a warm welcome!'

'Oh, auntie!' protested Priscilla, 'you mustn't think I mind a little hardship. Why, if beds weren't hard and food not quite nicely cooked now and then, we should soon grow too luxurious to do our duty, and that would be so very bad for us.'

'Oh, what *beauties*!' cried her aunt involuntarily, as she stooped to recover several sparkling gems from the floor of the cab. 'I mean, it's better to pick them up, dear, don't you think? they might get in people's *way*, you know. What a blessing you will be in our simple home! I want you to do all you can to instruct your cousins; don't be afraid of telling them of any faults

you may happen to see. Poor Cathie and Belle, I fear they are very far from being all they should be!' And Aunt Margarine heaved a sigh.

'Never mind, auntie, they will be better in time, I am sure. I wasn't *always* a good girl.'

Priscilla thoroughly enjoyed the first few days of her visit; even her aunt was only too grateful for instruction, and begged that Priscilla would tell her, quite candidly, of any shortcomings she might notice. And Priscilla, very kindly and considerately, always *did* tell her. Belle and Catherine were less docile, and she saw that it would take her some time to win their esteem and affection; but this was just what Priscilla liked—it was the usual experience of the heroines in the books, and much more interesting, too, than conquering her cousins' hearts at once.

Still, both Catherine and Belle persistently hardened their hearts against their gentle little cousin in the unkindest way; they would scarcely speak to her, and chose to make a grievance out of the fact that one or other of them was obliged, by their mother's strict orders, to be constantly in attendance upon her, in order to pick up and bring Mrs. Hoyle all the jewels that Priscilla scattered in profusion wherever she went.

'If you would only carry a plate about with you, Priscilla,' complained Belle one day, 'you could catch the jewels in that.'

'But I don't *want* to catch the jewels, dear Belle,' said Priscilla, with a playful but very sweet smile; 'if other people prize such things, that is not my fault, is it? *Jewels* do not make people any happier, Belle.'

'I should think not!' exclaimed Belle; 'I'm sure my back perfectly aches with stooping, and so does Cathie's. There! that big topaz has just gone and rolled under the sideboard, and mother will be *so* angry if I don't get it out. It is too bad of you, Priscilla. I believe you do it on purpose.'

'Ah, you will know me better some day, dear,' was the gentle response.

'Well, at all events, I think you might be naughty just now and then, Prissie, and give Cathie and me a half-holiday.'

'I would do anything else to please you, dear, but not that; you must not ask me to do what is impossible.'

Alas! not even this angelic behaviour, not even the loving admonitions, the tender rebukes, the shocked reproaches, that fell, accompanied by perfect cascades of jewels, from the lips of our pattern little Priscilla, succeeded in removing the utterly un-

founded prejudices of her cousins, though it was some consolation to feel that she was gradually acquiring a most beneficial influence over her aunt, who called Priscilla 'her little conscience.' For, you see, Priscilla's conscience had so little to do on her own account that it was always at the service of other people, and, indeed, quite enjoyed being useful, as was only natural to a conscientious conscience, which felt that it could never have been created to be idle.

Very soon another responsibility was added to little Priscilla's burdens. Her cousin Dick—the worldly one with the yellow boots—came home after his annual holiday, which, as he was the junior clerk in a large bank, he was obliged to take rather late in the year. She had looked forward to his return with some excitement. Dick, she knew, was frivolous and reckless in his habits; he went to the theatre occasionally, and frequently spent an evening in playing billiards and smoking cigars at a friend's house. There would be real credit in reforming poor Cousin Dick.

He was not long, of course, in hearing of Priscilla's marvellous endowment, and upon the first occasion they were alone together treated her with a respect and admiration which he had very certainly never shown her before.

'You're wonderful, Prissie,' he said; 'I'd no idea you had it in you!'

'Nor had I, Dick; but it shows that even a little girl can do something.'

'I should rather think so! And the way you look, as grave as a judge all the time. Prissie, I wish you'd tell me how you manage it. I wouldn't tell a soul.'

'But I don't know, Dick. I only talk, and the jewels come—that is all.'

'You artful little girl! You can keep a secret, I see, but so can I. And you might tell me how you do the trick. What put you up to the dodge? I'm to be trusted, I assure you.'

'Dick, you can't, you mustn't think there is any trickery about it! How can you believe I could be such a wicked little girl as to play tricks? It was an old fairy that gave me the gift. I'm sure I don't know why—unless she thought that I was a good child and deserved to be encouraged.'

'By Jove!' cried Dick. 'I never knew you were half such fun.'

'I am not fun, Dick. I think fun is generally so very vulgar; and, oh! I wish you wouldn't say "by Jove!" Surely you know he was a heathen god?'

'I seem to have heard of him in some such capacity,' said Dick. 'I say, Prissie, what a ripping big ruby!'

'Ah, Dick, Dick, you are like the others! I'm afraid you think more of the jewels than of any words I may say, and yet *jewels* are common enough.'

'They seem to be with you. Pearls, too, and such fine ones! Here, Priscilla, take them, they're your property.'

Priscilla put her hands behind her. 'No, indeed, Dick; they are of no use to me. Keep them, please; they may help to remind you of what I have said.'

'It's awfully kind of you,' said Dick, looking really touched. 'Then—since you put it in that way—thanks, I will, Priscilla—I'll have them made into a horseshoe pin.'

'You mustn't let it make you too fond of dress, then,' said Priscilla; 'but I'm afraid you're that already, Dick.'

'A diamond!' he cried. 'Go on, Priscilla, I'm listening—pitch into me, it will do me a *lot* of good!'

But Priscilla thought it wiser to say no more just then.

That night, after Priscilla and Cathie and Belle had gone to bed, Dick and his mother sat up talking until a late hour.

'Is dear little Cousin Priscilla to be a permanency in this establishment?' began her cousin, stifling a yawn, for there had been a rather copious flow of precious stones during the evening.

'Well, I shall keep her with us as long as I can,' said Mrs. Hoyle; 'she's such a darling! and they don't seem to want her at home. I'm sure, limited as my means are, I'm most happy to have such a visitor.'

'She seems to pay her way—only her way is a trifle trying at times, isn't it? She lectured me for half an hour on end without a single check!'

'Are you sure you picked them all up, dear boy?'

'Got a few of the best in my waistcoat pocket now. I'm afraid I scrunched a pearl or two, though—they were all over the place, you know. I suppose you've been collecting too, Mater?'

'I've picked up one or two,' said his mother; 'I should think I must have nearly enough now to fill a bandbox. And that brings me to what I wanted to consult you about, Richard. How are we to dispose of them? she has given them all to me.'

'You haven't done anything with them yet, then?'

'How could I? I have been obliged to stay at home. I've been so afraid of letting that precious child go out of my sight for a single hour, for fear some unscrupulous persons might get hold

of her. I thought that perhaps when you came home, you would dispose of the pearls for me.'

'But, Mater,' protested Dick, 'I can't go about asking who'll buy a whole bandbox full of jewels!'

'Oh, very well, then. I suppose we must go on living this hugger-mugger life, when we have the means of being as rich as princes—just because you are too lazy and selfish to take a little trouble!'

'I know something about these things,' said Dick; 'I know a fellow who's a diamond merchant, and it's not so easy to sell a lot of valuable stones as you seem to imagine, mother. And then Priscilla really overdoes it, you know. Why, if she goes on like this, she'll make diamonds as cheap as currants!'

'I should have thought that was a reason for selling them as soon as possible; but I'm only a woman, and of course *my* opinion is worth nothing! Still, you might take some of the biggest to your friend, and accept whatever he'll give you for them; there are plenty more—we needn't haggle over the price.'

'He'd want to know all about them—and what should I say? I can't tell him a cousin of mine produces them whenever she feels disposed.'

'You could say they have been in the family for some time, and you are obliged to part with them. I don't ask you to tell a falsehood, Richard!'

'Well, to tell you the honest truth,' said Dick, 'I'd rather have nothing to do with it. I'm not proud, but I shouldn't like it to get about among our fellows at the bank that I went about hawking diamonds!'

'But, you stupid, undutiful boy, don't you see that you could leave the bank—you need never do anything any more; we should all live rich and happy somewhere in the country, if we could only sell these jewels. And you won't do that one little thing!'

'Well,' said Dick, 'I'll think over it. I'll see what I can do.'

And his mother knew that it was perfectly useless to urge him any further, for, in some things, Dick was as obstinate as a mule, and far too easygoing and careless ever to succeed in life. He had promised to think over it, however, and she had to be contented with that.

On the evening following this conversation, Cousin Dick entered the sitting-room the moment after his return from the City, and found his mother to all appearances alone.

'What a dear, sweet little guileless angel Cousin Priscilla is, to be sure!' was his first remark.

'Then you *have* sold some of the stones!' cried Aunt Margarine. 'Sit down, like a good boy, and tell me all about it.'

'Well,' said Dick, 'I took the finest diamonds and rubies and pearls that escaped from that saintlike child last night, in the course of some extremely disparaging comments on my character and pursuits—I took those jewels to Faysett and Rosewater's, in New Bond Street—you know the shop, on the right-hand side as you go up——'

'Oh, go on, Dick, go on—never mind *where* it is—how much did you get for them?'

'I'm coming to that; keep cool, dear mamma. Well, I went in, and I saw the manager, and I said: "I want you to make these up into a horseshoe scarf-pin for me."'

'You said that! you never tried to sell one! Oh, Dick, you are too provoking!'

'Hold on, Mater, I haven't done yet. So the manager—a very gentlemanly person, rather thin on the top of the head—not that that affects his business capacities, for, after all——'

'Dick, do you want to drive me frantic?'

'I can't conceive any domestic occurrence which would be more distressing or generally inconvenient, mother dear. You do interrupt a fellow so. I forget where I was now—oh, the manager, ah, yes. Well, the manager said, "We shall be very happy to have the stones made up in any design you may select"—jewellery, by the way, seems to exercise a most refining influence upon the manners—this man had the deportment of a duke—"you may select," he said; "but, of course, I need not tell you that none of these stones are genuine."'

'Not genuine!' cried Aunt Margarine, excitedly. 'They must be—he was lying!'

'West End jewellers never lie,' said Dick; 'but, naturally, when he said that, I told him I should like to have some proof of his assertion. "Will you take the risk of testing?" said he. "Test away, my dear man!" said I. So he brought a little wheel near the emerald—whizz! and away went the emerald. Then he let a drop of something fall on the ruby—and it fizzled up for all the world like pink champagne. "Go on, don't mind *me*!" I told him; so he touched the diamond with an electric wire—phit! and there was only something that looked like the ash of a shocking bad cigar; then the pearls—and they popped like so many air-

balloons. "Are you satisfied?" he asked. "Oh, perfectly," said I; "you needn't trouble about the horseshoe pin now. Good evening"; and so I came away, after thanking him for his very amusing scientific experiments.'

'And do you believe that the jewels are all shams, Dick; do you really?'

'I think it so probable, that nothing on earth will induce me to offer a single one for sale. I should never hear the last of it at the bank. No, Mater. Dear little Priscilla's sparkling conversation may be unspeakably precious from a moral point of view, but it has no commercial value—those jewels are bogus, shams, every stone of them!'

Now, all this time our heroine had been sitting unperceived in a corner behind a window-curtain, reading 'The Wide, Wide World,' a work which she was never weary of perusing. Some children would have come forward earlier; but Priscilla was never a forward child, and she remained as quiet as a little mouse up to the moment when she could control her feelings no longer.

'It isn't true!' she cried passionately, bursting out of her retreat and confronting her cousin. 'It's cruel and unkind to say my jewels are shams—they are real—they are, they are!'

'Hullo, Prissie!' said her abandoned cousin, 'so you combine jewel-dropping with eavesdropping, eh?'

'How dare you!' cried Aunt Margarine, almost beside herself, 'you odious little prying minx, setting up to teach your elders and your betters, with your cut-and-dried priggish maxims! When I think how I have petted and indulged you all this time, and borne with the abominable litter you left in every room you entered—and now to find you are only a little, conceited, hypocritical impostor—oh, *why* haven't I words to express my contempt for such conduct? why am I dumb at such a moment as this?'

'Come, mother,' said her son soothingly, 'that's not such a bad beginning—I should call it fairly fluent and expressive, myself.'

'Be quiet, Dick. I'm speaking to this wicked child, who has obtained our love and sympathy and attention on false pretences, for which she ought to be put in prison—yes, in prison—for such a heartless trick on relations who can ill afford to be so cruelly disappointed!'

'But, aunt!' expostulated poor Priscilla, 'you always said you

only kept the jewels as souvenirs, and that it did you so much good to hear me talk !’

‘Don’t argue with *me*, miss ! If I had known the stones were wretched, tawdry imitations, do you imagine for an instant——’

‘Now, mother,’ said Dick, ‘be fair ; they were uncommonly good imitations, you must admit that !’

‘Indeed, indeed, I thought they were real—the fairy never told me !’

‘After all,’ said Dick, ‘it’s not Priscilla’s fault. She can’t help it if the stones aren’t real, and she made up for quality by quantity, anyhow—didn’t you, Prissie ?’

‘Hold your tongue, Richard—she *could* help it—she knew it all the time ; and she’s a hateful, sanctimonious, little stuck-up viper, and so I tell her to her face !’

Priscilla could scarcely believe that kind, indulgent, smooth-spoken Aunt Margarine could be addressing such words to her—it frightened her so much that she did not dare to answer, and just then Cathie and Belle came into the room.

‘Oh, mother,’ they began penitently, ‘we’re *so* sorry—but we couldn’t find dear Prissie anywhere, so we haven’t picked up anything the whole afternoon !’

‘Ah, my poor darlings, you shall never be your cousin’s slaves any more—don’t go near her, she’s a naughty, deceitful wretch ; her jewels are false, my sweet loves, false ! She has imposed upon us all—she does not deserve to associate with you !’

‘I always said Prissie’s jewels looked like the things you get on crackers !’ said Belle, tossing her head.

‘Now we shall have a little rest, I hope,’ chimed in Cathie.

‘I shall send her home to her parents this very night !’ declared Aunt Margarine, ‘she shall not stay here to pervert our happy household with her miserable *gew-gaws* !’

Here Priscilla found her tongue : ‘Do you think I *want* to stay ?’ she said proudly. ‘I see now that you only wanted to have me here because—because of the horrid jewels ; and I never knew they were false ; and I let you have them all, every one, you know I did ! and I wanted you to mind what I said, and not trouble about picking them up—but you *would* do it ! And now you all turn round upon me like this. What have I done to be treated so—what have I done ?’

‘Bravo, Prissie !’ cried Dick. ‘Mother, if you ask me, I think it serves us all jolly well right ; and it’s a downright shame to bullyrag poor Prissie in this way !’

'I *don't* ask you,' retorted his mother sharply, 'so you will kindly keep your opinions to yourself.'

'Tra-la-la!' sang rude Dick, 'we are a united family—we are, we are, we are!'—a vulgar refrain he had picked up at one of the burlesque theatres he was only too fond of frequenting.

But Priscilla came to him, and held out her hand quite gratefully and humbly. 'Thank you, Dick,' she said, '*you* are kind, at all events. And I'm sorry you couldn't have your horseshoe pin!'

'Oh, *hang* the horseshoe pin!' exclaimed Dick; and poor Priscilla was so thoroughly cast down that she quite forgot to reprove him.

She was not sent home that night, after all, for Dick protested against it in such strong terms that even Aunt Margarine saw that she must give way; but early on the following morning Priscilla quitted her aunt's house, leaving her belongings to be sent on after her.

She had not far to walk, and it so happened that her way led through the identical lane in which she had met the fairy. Wonderful to relate, there, on the very same bench and in precisely the same attitude, sat the old lady, peering out from under her poke-bonnet, and resting her knotty old hands on her crutch-handled stick.

Priscilla walked past with her head in the air, pretending not to notice her, for she considered that the fairy had played her a most malicious and ill-natured trick.

'Hey-day!' said the old lady (it is only fairies who can permit themselves such old-fashioned expressions nowadays), 'hey-day; why, here's my good little girl again! Isn't she going to speak to me?'

'No, she's not!' said Priscilla; but she found herself compelled to stop, notwithstanding.

'Why, what's all this about? You're not going to sulk with me, my dear, are you?'

'I think you're a very cruel, bad, unkind old woman for deceiving me like this!'

'Goodness me! Why, didn't the jewels come after all?'

'Yes—they came, only they were all horrid artificial ones—and it is a shame, it *is*!' cried poor Priscilla from her bursting heart.

'Artificial, were they? that is really very odd! Can you account for that at all, now?'

'Of course I can't! You told me they would drop out when—'

ever I said anything to improve people—and I was *always* saying them. Aunt had a bandbox in her room quite full of jewels.'

'Ah, you've been very industrious, evidently; it's unfortunate your jewels should all have been artificial, most unfortunate. I don't know how to explain it, unless'—and here the old lady looked up queerly from under her white eyelashes—'unless your goodness was artificial too.'

'How do you mean?' asked Priscilla, feeling strangely uncomfortable. 'I'm sure I've never done anything the least bit naughty—how can my goodness possibly be artificial?'

'Ah, that I can't explain; but I know this—that people who are really good are generally the last persons to suspect it, and the moment they become aware of it, and begin to think how good they are, and how bad everybody else is, why, somehow or other, their goodness crumbles away, and leaves only a sort of outside shell behind it. And—I'm very old, and, of course, I may be mistaken—but I think (I only say I *think*, mind) that a little girl as young as you must have some faults hidden about her somewhere; and that, perhaps, on the whole she would be better employed in trying to find them out and cure them before she attempted to correct those of other people. And I'm sure it can't be good for any child to be always seeing herself in a little picture, just as she likes to fancy other people see her. Very many pretty books are written about good little girls, and it is quite true that a child may exercise a great influence for good—more than they can ever tell, perhaps—but only just so long as they remain natural and unconscious, and not unwholesome little pragmatistical prigresses, for then they make themselves and other people worse than they might have been. But, of course, my dear, *you* never made such a mistake as that!'

Priscilla turned very red, and began to scrape one of her feet against the other. She was thinking, and her thoughts were not at all pleasant ones.

'Oh, Fairy,' she said at last, 'I'm afraid that's just what I *did* do! I was always thinking how good I was, and putting everybody—papa, mamma, Alick, Betty, Aunt Margarine, Cathie, Belle, and even poor Cousin Dick—right! I have been a horrid little hateful prig, and that's why all the jewels were rubbish. But, oh! shall I have to go on talking sham diamonds and things all the rest of my life?'

'That,' said the fairy, 'depends entirely on yourself. You have the remedy in your own hands, or rather lips.'

‘Ah, you mean I needn’t talk at all? But I must—sometimes. I couldn’t bear to be dumb as long as I lived; and it would look so odd, too.’

‘I never said you were not to open your lips at all. But can’t you try to talk simply and naturally, not like little girls or boys in any story-books whatever, not to “show off” or improve people, only as a girl would talk who remembers that, after all, her elders are quite as likely as she is to know what they ought or ought not to do and say?’

‘I shall forget sometimes, I know I shall!’ said Priscilla, disconsolately.

‘If you do, there will be something to remind you, you know. And by-and-by, perhaps, as you grow up, you may, quite by accident, say something sincere, and noble, and true, and then a jewel will fall which will really be of value!’

‘No!’ cried Priscilla, ‘no, *please*! Oh, Fairy, let me off that! If I *must* drop them, let them be false ones to punish me—not real. I don’t want to be rewarded any more for being good—if I ever am really good!’

‘Come,’ said the fairy, with a much pleasanter smile, ‘you are not a hopeless case, at all events. It shall be as you wish, then, and perhaps it will be the wisest arrangement for all parties. Now run away home, and see how little use you can make of your fairy gift.’

Priscilla found her family still at breakfast. ‘Why,’ observed her father, raising his eyebrows as she entered the room, ‘here’s our little monitor (or is it *monitress*, eh, Priscilla?) back again. Children, we shall all have to mind our p’s and q’s, and, indeed, our entire alphabet now!’

‘I’m sure,’ said her mother, kissing her fondly, ‘Priscilla knows we’re all delighted to have her home!’

‘I’m not,’ said Alick, with all a boy’s engaging candour.

‘Nor am I,’ added Betty; ‘it’s been ever so much nicer at home while she’s been away!’

Priscilla burst into tears as she hid her face upon her mother’s protecting shoulder.

‘It’s true!’ she sobbed; ‘I don’t deserve that you should be glad to see me. . . . I’ve been hateful and horrid, I know . . . but, oh, if you’ll only forgive me and love me, and put up with me a little, I’ll try not to preach and be a prig any more—I will, truly!’

And at this her father called her to his side, and embraced her with a fervour he had not shown for a very long time.

I should not like to go so far as to assert that no imitation diamond, ruby, pearl, or emerald ever again proceeded from Priscilla's lips. Habits are not cured in a day, and fairies—however old they may be—are still fairies, so it *did* occasionally happen that a mock jewel made an unwelcome appearance after one of Priscilla's more unguarded utterances. But she was always frightfully ashamed and abashed by such an accident, and buried the imitation stones immediately in a corner of the garden. And as time went on, the jewels grew smaller and smaller, and frequently dissolved upon her tongue, leaving a faintly bitter taste, until at last they ceased altogether, and Priscilla became as pleasant and unaffected a girl as she who may now be finishing this history.

Aunt Margarine never sent back the contents of that bandbox; she kept the biggest stones and had a brooch made of them, while, as she never mentioned that they were false, no one out of the family ever so much as suspected it.

But, for all that, she always declared that her niece Priscilla had bitterly disappointed her expectations—which was, perhaps, the truest thing that Aunt Margarine ever said.

F. ANSTEY.

How we failed to get to St. Kilda.

IF it should ever happen to you to spend your autumn holiday in Skye, you will in all likelihood find yourself very unwilling to leave it. This is not only because it is altogether delightful, but also on account of the amazing discomforts which you have to endure to reach it. That is the chief fault in Skye—that it is an island; and yet that is its salvation, for were it not an island it would be yet more tourist-bestridden than it is. Being an island, it has to be approached by sea; and the alternative routes place you in a dilemma of indecision between the minimum of sea-suffering with the maximum of dislocation *viâ* Strome Ferry and the Highland Railway, and the maximum of *mal de mer* with the minimum of railway travelling *viâ* Oban and the good ship *Grenadier*. Mr. Stanley, it is said, underwent great sufferings in reaching Emin Pasha. It is doubtful if his worst experiences were not luxuries in comparison with the anguish of travelling on the Highland line.

Last autumn, however, I visited Skye in what is indubitably the right royal manner—I went up in a yacht from Oban. My companion was young Mr. Robert Burscough, whose father, Colonel Burscough, rents the shooting-box at which we were going to stay.

It was not a large yacht—about five tons, I believe—and we had but one professional sea-dog to navigate it. This, however, was not our full complement of hands. The rest of the crew—viz. the skipper's twelve-year-old son—we were obliged to leave behind at Oban, so ill had it made itself, on pay day, with 'conversation lozenges'; a form of poison which, I fancy, is peculiar to the sweet-shops of the North.

Neither Robert Burscough nor myself knew much of ships, except from pictures, but the glorious morning on which we sailed from Oban might have inspired even a patient of Pasteur with confidence in the water. We had grave misgivings as to the intentions of an infernal machine, called by the skipper 'the

boom,' which swung ponderously to and fro at every tack; but all went well, and as we sailed into Tobermory in the evening we 'shivered our timbers' and 'spliced the spanker-boom' with the best of the sea-dogs of Marryat or Michael Scott.

Speed, bonnie boat, like a bird on the wing,
Over the sea to Skye.

It is a very pretty song, but there is no poetry in one's feelings as one gets clear of the shelter of the headland of Mull and in the rolling open sea off Ardnamurchan Point. The sight of those islands Egg and Rhum, to which the skipper drew our attention, on what he called the 'weather bow,' failed to arouse its due enthusiasm; and when Robert Burscough groaned, in tones of anguish, 'Oh lor! I say, it reminds one of egg-flip!' the vision was nearly fatal.

For several hours we raced, on fair terms, one of those fine well-manned fishing-boats of the North Sea, but as the wind fell astern she completely distanced us by a strange manœuvre. She unshipped her bowsprit, and, making it fast to the mast close down upon the deck, swung it out over the side, so that it performed the function of a spinnaker-boom; and, with her jib set as a spinnaker, away she went with the wind abaft, and we, as it seemed, abaft the wind. But we were destined to see our friend again, for as we passed up the Kyle Reay—that narrow passage, at the head of Sleat Sound, between Skye and the mainland—the clouds came down blackly, and the rain began pattering, and it grew dark beneath the lowering sky and the steep cliffs on either side, where Scylla and Charybdis might have their dwelling. So that when we had rounded the iron beacon that stands at the head of Kyle Reay, there, in the little anchorage over against Balmacarra, and a mile or two short of Kyle Akin (readers who have visited Skye in the steamers from Oban will recognise the place), there we saw our friend, the fisher-boat, brought up for the night. Whereon we decided to follow her very excellent example, and, running down our sails to the accompaniment of whistling winds, pelting rain, and flapping canvas and cordage, soon put ourselves to rights.

It rained and blew without interruption for three days and three nights, during which, likewise without interruption (unless you count sleep), we played piquet, drank whisky, ate tinned meat, and smoked tobacco—all in a cabin six feet by four, by four. At least those were its dimensions when we left Oban, but I am

fully satisfied that it contracted considerably before we lost sight of that iron beacon. It had seemed quite a commodious apartment when we first began to measure ourselves into it, but after we had been practising this measuring process for three days and nights we seemed to make a perfect nutshell of it. However, the three days came to an end somehow, as even the most intolerable days will, if you only wait long enough, and the next morning out came the sun, smiling and laughing, as if it were not a bit ashamed of its truancy, and smiled us back into good humour before we reached our haven.

Now, a great many people have been to Skye, despite the hardships of the journey, for the English are an adventurous race, but Skye is but half-way—nay, but a fraction of the way—to a much less familiar and more remote island—the island of St. Kilda.

I ought, perhaps, to have mentioned before that the party which we expected to meet in Skye included, besides the Burscoughs, a certain Professor Flegg. Mr. Flegg was a man of prodigious learning. In what particular line his learning lay I was always afraid to ask, but I fancy that it was almost universal—in all lines. Not only so, but he was incomparably the most modest, courteous, and self-depreciating man I have ever met. One of the principal pleasures which Robert Burscough expected from our autumn in Skye was the observation of the Professor, whom he profanely termed 'old Flegg.'

'You'll see,' he said, 'old Flegg'll be rigged out in a high hat and a paper collar and a kilt; you see if he isn't.'

In this alluring prospect we were disappointed. 'Old Flegg' wore much the same clothes—rusty black—as he wore in London, and a 'fore and aft' cap, which did not at all look as if it belonged to him. We had considerable entertainment, however, in instructing Mr. Flegg in the use of the gun.

'I have observed, my dear sir,' he said, with his deferential courtesy, 'I have observed that firearms are safest when carried at the port.'

Putting this conclusion in practice, he used to stride over the moor with his 'firearm' held perpendicularly, with both hands, in front of him, recalling to mind the hare in Struwpeter who has stolen the huntsman's gun. What made him a less desirable companion on the moor was that Robert Burscough had insidiously advised him to 'Swing your gun when you fire, Professor, so as to make the shot scatter more'; which advice, zealously

followed by the Professor, 'scattered' not only the shot, but the whole shooting party.

For all and sundry such counsels the Professor always expressed his courteous gratitude—surely the most simple-minded of learned men!

Now, the Professor, in common with the rest of us, expressed a yearning desire to know something of that lonely little island of St. Kilda, away out, all by itself, weathering the Atlantic storms, far beyond the outer Hebrides whose outlines we could well distinguish, across the Minch, from the northern corner of Skye. Professor Flegg had suffered cruelly in crossing even that small nearly land-locked offshoot of the Minch betwixt Skye and the mainland; for of the Flegg that arrived at Strome Ferry but Flegg — x (an unknown but large quantity) reached Portree. *A fortiori*, to what power would not that unknown x be raised in crossing that stretch of open Atlantic which lay betwixt us and St. Kilda! Professor Flegg concluded, therefore, to satisfy by proxy his scientific interest in the remote island.

We talked much beforehand of our intention of visiting it, and were greatly confirmed in our purpose by the incredulity shown by Colonel Burscough about the chances of our ever accomplishing it. As the steamer was advertised to start for St. Kilda at an unseasonably early hour in the morning, Robert Burscough and I started off after dinner, and drove into Portree the evening before. Arriving at the chief hostelry at about 11 P.M., we fought our way through a dense atmosphere of peat and tobacco-smoke, to be informed by the host that a large meeting of the Landlord Abolition Society, or some such philanthropic evangel, was being held in the town. The crofters had mustered in great force, as was apparent from the all-pervading atmosphere of peat-smoke by which they are ubiquitously attended. All the beds in the hotel were taken, and crofters were slumbering, several deep, both on and below the billiard-table. Menaces, bribes, and entreaties succeeded in securing for our use two chairs apiece, on which we betook ourselves to such rest as we might snatch, after bidding the waiter, on pain of death, to wake us in time in the morning to catch the steamer for St. Kilda.

What with the discomfort of the couch and the Gaelic snores of the circumjacent crofters I was but in my first beauty sleep when the waiter lightly touched me on the shoulder.

'The boat will be awa' in half an hour,' said he.

'Indeed,' I said, and glanced at Robert Burscough, who slept

profoundly. 'Hush!' I whispered to the waiter. 'Is it a fine morning?'

'Na,' said he, 'it's a gae stormy morn.'

'Then go away again,' I whispered; 'and, whatever you do, don't wake us till the boat's clean away.'

For a quarter of an hour I was uneasy—terribly anxious lest Robert Burscough should awake in time for us to catch the steamer. At length I heard her whistle, and sank peacefully to rest as if I were on a bed of eiderdown.

'I say—hi!' It was Robert Burscough's voice that awoke me about an hour later. 'I say, what time is it?'

'About eight, I think,' I said, looking at my watch.

'Eight!' he said. 'But the steamer goes—I mean went—at seven!'

'So I believe,' I said.

'Oh lor! and that confounded waiter never woke us!'

'That confounded waiter' had a very severe time of it with Mr. Robert Burscough a few minutes later. The waiter asserted that he had awakened me at half-past six, and that I had then told him to go away and not come back till the boat had gone.

'You see,' I said to Robert, 'it must be that wretched trick I have of talking in my sleep.'

At all events the steamer was gone. There was not much good waiting for the next, for it did not go for six weeks.

'The question is,' as Robert said, 'what are we to do? We cannot possibly go back and let on we've never been. We'd better cruise about for three days somewhere, and then go back and tell them that we've been there.'

We decided we would go a walking tour. Its distance was to be determined at the pleasure of the one who should first call a halt; the pace of walking by the pace of him who walked the slower. This understanding is as indispensable to the success of a pedestrian tour as of a cavalry charge.

'Tell you what we might do,' Robert Burscough suggested, 'get leave from the Sheriff to fish the Skæbost. We can borrow rods here, and send them back from Sligachan to-morrow.'

The Skæbost, the pride of Skye, recalls forcibly, by the colour and velocity of its waters, the Regent's Park Canal. It meanders sluggishly through low-lying moorland. It runs deep between its banks, and only in a storm of wind and rain are its waters sufficiently troubled for the artificial fly to delude the eye of the hungry salmon. These conditions were excellently fulfilled on

the present occasion, but few fish were in the river, and we caught but one—a nine-pound grilse.

The grilse we presented to the innkeeper's wife at Sligachan, which we reached about nightfall, thoroughly soaked to the skin. We went to bed while our clothes were dried and our salmon cooked; then got up to eat him, and then to bed again to sleep him off.

A quaint little place is that Sligachan, beneath the overwhelming Cuchullins. It is your duty to go up one of the Cuchullins every day that you are at Sligachan, but we left our duty undone. We took it very easy. We strolled along the not too uneven tenor of our way, encountering in each corrie a fresh bevy of tourists. Each tourist carried a long crook-handled stick, to show he was a Scotchman, but dropped his 'h's,' which he had left behind in London. There was great excitement among one party of tourists. One of its members was gazing through a telescope at a stag which he saw on the mountain-side. When his eye was satisfied with seeing, he handed his glass to another of his party, who gave a prolonged 'whew-ew-ew!' to indicate his appreciation of the noble animal, and handed the telescope to another. When they had all looked and 'whew-ew-ew-ed,' they politely invited Robert Burscough and myself to look also. We looked and 'whew-ew-ew-ed'; then gave the telescope back to the tourists, thanked them, and went our way.

After this it seemed, as the novelists say, as if an indefinable something had come between us. We were not to each other what we were. I determined that I would make a clean breast of it.

'Robert,' I said, 'did you see that stag?'

'Well,' said he, 'did you?'

'Well, I really was not certain whether I made it out quite clearly or not. There was something, you know, that perhaps might have been a stag.'

'Yes; that was just my feeling too,' he said. 'It might have been a stag, you know.'

'Oh yes,' I said, 'it might have been a stag, but I do not think I can honestly say that I saw one.'

'Well, I don't think I should like to swear to it either,' he said.

'It is a great pity,' I said; 'I should like to have seen one.'

We afterwards heard that there are no deer on that part of the Cuchullins.

After this explanation we proceeded in much harmony to call at the house of a friend, with whom we spent the greater part of the day in sea-otter hunting. We were in luck to fall in for this fun, which can only be followed at low tides. These Skye sea-otters are not the sea otter from which the finest fur is taken, but are mere river-otters come down to the sea-side for change of air. They live in cairns by the seaside, from which they can be ousted by a plucky terrier; but in most states of tide the bolt-hole is so near the sea that they are out and under water before one can get a shot at them. We visited one or two cairns in vain, much to the disappointment of the three terriers, each of which was an exact facsimile of the other two. We cruised about from cairn to cairn in a little yacht, with the three little doggies in the dingey towing behind. Failing their otter-bait, they fell on each other tooth and nail, for exercise, and continued the contest regardless of rebuke until their master drew the dingey alongside, and, seizing the nearest doggie by the tail, hauled him on board the yacht, with the others, who had a fast hold with their teeth, depending from him like a string of sausages.

At the third cairn we were more successful. A fine worrying in the heart of the cairn of stones was succeeded by a rush and scramble, and out bolted an old otter, followed by one half-grown. With a bang! bang! our host had bagged them both, whilst songs of thanksgiving went up from the mouths of all the fishes who beheld it.

By afternoon of the next day we reckoned it time we should return from St. Kilda. The evening was mainly occupied with preparing an account of the voyage and the island. This was the easier that we knew almost nothing at all about it. Our scope was practically unlimited. We thought it likely, however, that we knew as much as Colonel Burscough or Professor Flegg, so that any departure from the truth was likely to be undetected. Robert Burscough assured me that he knew there were native cavalry upon the island, because he had lately read in *Truth* of a gentleman holding a commission in the 'St. Kilda Horse.'

'They're something like the Maltese Fencibles, or the Cape Mounted Rifles, you know,' he said. But this did not seem much on which to base an exhaustive account of the island and its general society.

'It seems to me,' I said, 'as if I remembered hearing that they live almost entirely on one animal, like the Esquimaux on the

reindeer, or the North American Indians on the buffalo. I wish I could remember the name of the animal, but, of course, it's some sort of seal. It couldn't be anything else. I expect we shall have to call it "a peculiar species of seal."

I was very sorry that I could not remember the proper name of the creature. I puzzled over it all the evening, but could not get it. Just, however, as I was lighting my candle to go to bed the idea seemed to flash out with the match.

'I've got it,' I said triumphantly. 'Foumart—that's it. I am pleased to have remembered. That 'll make the whole thing all right. It won't be so very far from the truth now.'

'Never mind. So much the better,' said Robert. He was disappointed—I could see that—though he strove to make the best of it. It was hard to be forced from the alluring paths of fiction into the hard and stern reality of fact. 'I'm glad you've remembered the name,' he forced himself to say. 'Don't forget it again before morning. Good night!'

We got our account into proper order the next morning, and, timing things well, reached home about five o'clock in the afternoon. A light rain was falling, and down by the mouth of the burn, not far from the house, we beheld a familiar object. It was Professor Flegg. He was sitting on a little stool. He was completely enveloped, save for his head, in a voluminous mackintosh. Over his head he held a large umbrella. He was seated on the brink of the stream, over which stuck out, motionless, his fishing-rod, while through his powerful spectacles he closely watched his cork which wobbled on the water.

'I say, old Flegg clot-fishing!' Robert Burscough whispered to me in huge delight.

A 'clot' is a very unpleasant confusion of worms and worsted. An eel, endeavouring to disengage a worm, entangles his fangs in the worsted. The fisherman gently raises him to the top of the water, then gives a violent whip back of the rod over his head, and Master Eel, losing his toothhold a second too late, finds himself flying a considerable distance up country, where—on dry land—Mr. Man has him at a disadvantage.

As we came upon Mr. Flegg thus assiduously employed, it was evident that an eel was wickedly coquetting with him. Momentary agitation every now and then affected his float, agitation which manifested itself throughout all Flegg—even to the ribs of the umbrella. At length Mr. Flegg prepared for decisive action. He allowed the umbrella to fall backwards. He raised the rod very

gently, then whipped it up over his head with such energy that he threw himself backward off the little stool, while the eel, after flying through the air like a pterodactyl, descended very nearly in Robert Burscough's eye.

I left Robert to secure and decapitate the eel, while I proceeded to try to separate Mr. Flegg from his umbrella. He had lost his spectacles, without which he could see no more than his spectacles could without him.

'Indeed, my dear sir, I am deeply indebted to you,' he said, as I replaced them on his nose. 'Has our friend Robert succeeded in securing our quarry?'

The latter came up at the moment with the wriggling but decapitated body of the eel. Mr. Flegg was intensely pleased and excited. He did not care at all that he had ruined his umbrella, which was compound- and complex-fractured and dislocated in all directions. He had caught six eels, and now he insisted upon carrying them home himself. It was but a hundred yards, but six eels are bad to carry. Mr. Flegg would get all but one firmly wedged between his fingers, and then, in putting in the last, the first would wriggle loose, and then one in the middle would come out and demoralise the whole arrangement. It was just like 'pigs in clover.'

'Their vitality, my dear sir, is truly prodigious,' Mr. Flegg justly said. 'I have, to-day, my dear sir, been severely bitten by one from which I had already severed the head.'

'Oh! now really, Mr. Flegg,' Robert Burscough ejaculated, 'that is trying us a bit too high. How in the world could it bite when it had no head to bite with?'

'It was with the jaws of the severed head that it bit me, my dear sir,' Mr. Flegg answered, with grave courtesy. 'Naturally it was not the headless body.'

'I beg your pardon,' said Robert. 'I did not understand.'

Acting on a prearranged plan, we determined to give the family but a very general description of St. Kilda until we arrived at the reading of our written narrative. We reported that we had had a pleasant time, had heard and seen much that was new and strange, and had jotted down, for the edification of the home-stayers, an account of the strange life, habits, and circumstances of the St. Kilda islanders, which Robert Burscough promised to read to the company after dinner.

'It was, indeed, considerate of you, my dear sir,' said Mr. Flegg, as Robert unrolled his manuscript, 'to have been at the

pains of committing to writing your doubtless deeply-interesting and instructive experiences.'

'Not at all, Mr. Flegg; it was a pleasure, I assure you,' Robert said pleasantly. 'I will pass over,' he went on, 'an account I have sketched in, principally for my own satisfaction, of the incidents of the voyage—or, perhaps, you would like to hear it?'

No one expressed any fervent desire to do so, so Robert, a little disappointed, said: 'Very well; if you don't care for that, I will at once go on to the description of St. Kilda.

"As you draw near the island," he began his reading, "your ears are assailed by a loud and constantly increasing moaning or bellowing—a weird and dreadful sound, mingling, as it does, with the roar of the waves which dash ceaselessly upon the precipitous shore. This terrifying noise proceeds from a beast named 'foumart' by the inhabitants of the island, who are entirely dependent on this creature for their food, for the wigwams they live in, and indeed for their very existence. The 'foumart' would appear to be a cross between the right whale and the seal, being amphibious in its habits, and having its dwelling in the caves by the sea-side. It feeds entirely upon fish, in the catching of which it displays an almost incredible swiftness, and it is by taking advantage of this peculiarity that the islanders are enabled to capture it."

'Pardon me, my dear sir, for one moment,' Mr. Flegg interrupted. 'I am indeed at a loss to understand how it can be by taking advantage of its incredible swiftness——'

'Almost incredible,' Robert Burscough softly corrected.

Mr. Flegg acknowledged the correction by an inclination of his head, and repeated his remark in a much amended form: 'I do not fully understand, my dear sir, how its undoubtedly marvellous swiftness can at all aid the islanders in effecting its capture.'

'No, no, Mr. Flegg; it's not that. It's the peculiarity of its feeding on fish that does that,' Robert explained.

'Why, hang it all, boy,' said Colonel Burscough, 'there's nothing so very peculiar in that. Why, I eat fish myself sometimes. We all eat fish. You did not go all the way to St. Kilda to find an animal that ate fish!'

'Oh no, indeed, uncle; certainly not. Perhaps I had better go on,' said Robert hastily; and as no one moved an amendment he continued the reading of his manuscript:—

"They"—that's the islanders—"having by some means peculiar to themselves (for they have no apparatus which we should deem at all suitable for such a purpose) contrived to capture a great number of fish, thrust into their bodies" (the fishes' bodies, you know) "large fishhooks, and setting them floating upon the water at the end of long, stout fishing-lines, watch eagerly until they are pounced upon and swallowed by the voracious fougart——"

'Pardon me for one instant if I again interrupt you, my dear sir,' said Mr. Flegg; 'but I think that even you yourself, despite the privilege you have had of exploring the island, must regard it as a singular fact that a people completely destitute of such apparatus as we should deem suitable for the capture of fish, should yet find no apparent difficulty whatever in the procuring of such articles as fishhooks and long fishing-lines!'

'Eh? Yes. Rum thing that, isn't it?' said Robert, much perplexed. 'Did you ask the Master of the Horse about that?' he said, referring to me.

'They are a most peculiar people, Mr. Flegg,' I said; 'most peculiar. No; I forgot to put that point to the Master of the Horse. I wish I had thought of it, but I did not.'

'And who the mischief is the Master of the Horse?' Colonel Burscough asked.

'Oh, don't you know, uncle?' said Robert, with gentle surprise. 'He's the commander of the cavalry—of the St. Kilda Horse, as they are called. He had a long talk with him,' he added, indicating me.

'A very interesting companion,' I observed.

'Indeed!' said Colonel Burscough. 'Go on, Robert.'

"—— voracious fougart," said Robert, picking up the thread of his parable. "No sooner has the dainty fish, with the cruel barbed hook imbedded in it, disappeared down the maw of the fougart, than the islanders, who have been lying in wait, seize the other, or shoreward, end of the line, fasten it to a horse—or, if necessary, a pair, or even, on occasion, a team—which they have kept in readiness for the purpose, and drive up country, dragging the loudly-bellowing fougart at the end of the rope behind them. The islanders then fall upon the beast with sharpened stones, loud cries, and pieces of bottle-glass which have been left by previous excursionists to the island, and in an almost incredibly short space of time the fougart is skinned, his flesh laid aside for eating, and his fat carefully preserved for melting down into oil for lamps made out of his own skull."

"The myriad uses to which these people put this single animal are almost inconceivable. It is to the islanders of St. Kilda what the buffalo is to the North American Indian, the reindeer to the Esquimaux. With its skins they wall their wigwams and make their clothes—which, in form, are a modification of the Highland kilt. Its teeth they use for necklaces, earrings, and other ornamental purposes. Its flesh is their sole means of subsistence——"

"Can it be, my dear sir, that they eat none of the fish which, as you have stated in your most interesting and instructive description, they capture in such numbers as bait for the allurements of the voracious fougart?" asked Mr. Flegg.

"You asked the Master of the Horse that question, I think," said Robert, referring again to me, "and he said 'no fish.'"

"No fish," said the Master of the Horse, "I replied.

"With regard to the social habits of the islanders," Robert Burscough resumed, "we were unable, I regret to say, to learn any details. So far as we could gather, however, cannibalism is almost unknown among them, except under stress of the greatest pressure; and even in those circumstances it is only the very old or the very young—those, in fact, who are unfit for work, that is, for fougart hunting—who fall victims. Other details, many of them, doubtless, of absorbing interest, we were unable to gather, owing to the great difficulty of conversing with a savage people, ignorant of every language but their own——"

"Pardon my once more interrupting you, my dear sir," said Mr. Flegg, "but I had understood that our friend here had conversed at no inconsiderable length with the Master of the Horse, who indeed proved, I believe I am correct in stating, a most interesting companion!"

"Gestures, Mr. Flegg—purely by gestures," I explained.

"Must have been a *blasted* interesting companion," Colonel Burscough observed.

"I have frequently read and heard it stated, my dear sir," said Mr. Flegg, addressing Colonel Burscough, "that amongst savage peoples the faculty of conversing by means of gestures has reached a degree of development quite inconceivable to us who have had few occasions for the interchange of our ideas through such a medium."

"You're quite right, Mr. Flegg," I said. "It's simply inconceivable."

"When we turn," Robert resumed, "to the geological aspect

of St. Kilda, we find everywhere a uniform character of carboniferous limestone and basaltic trap. Igneous formations of every kind——”

‘Oh! hang it all, boy,’ broke in the Colonel impatiently, ‘skip all that, for goodness’ sake. Go on to the next heading.’

‘Very well, uncle,’ Robert answered submissively; and, after turning to a new page and hunting about it for a little while, went on:—“The flora of this interesting but most bleak-looking island is of the most meagre description. Tufts of stunted, wind-swept grass——”

‘Oh! hang it all, my dear boy, I don’t want to hurt your feelings,’ said the Colonel, ‘but, upon my word, we don’t want to hear all that. Haven’t you got any more about the people to tell us?’

‘Well, I am afraid, do you know, uncle,’ said Robert slowly, as he turned over the pages, ‘I am afraid there’s nothing more that would interest you very much. You see,’ he said, as he laid the manuscript reverently on the table, ‘it’s very hard to learn much about the people of a new country when you can’t speak their language. I think I’ve given you all the information we managed to pick up.’

‘May I express to you my thanks, my dear sir,’ said Mr. Flegg, courteously, ‘for the very interesting information which you have been kind enough to collate for us. Will you permit me the great privilege of re-perusing your manuscript at my leisure? I am convinced that it will contain much of interest to myself, as a man of science, in that portion which you have left unread; for from that which you have been good enough to read to us I have derived not only much entertainment, but much information which to me was new.’

‘It would be new to most people, I fancy, Mr. Flegg,’ I said. ‘There are few who have had the privilege to visit St. Kilda. Robert and I may reckon ourselves uncommonly fortunate.’

‘Indeed, my dear sir, you may,’ said Mr. Flegg, as he took up his candlestick and prepared to carry off Robert’s manuscript with him to bed.

‘Do you think of publishing it, Robert?’ Colonel Burscough asked, as we proceeded to follow Mr. Flegg’s example.

‘Well, I had not thought of it,’ he answered. ‘You see, I do not quite know what sort of periodical would care to put it in.’

‘You might try *Knowledge*,’ I suggested.

'Yes, I think you'd better,' said Colonel Burscough, drily. 'Or, perhaps, you'd better first try *Truth*.'

'Uncle twigs it's all gammon,' Robert whispered to me as we went upstairs, 'but we boshed old Flegg to rights.'

The next morning, before breakfast, Robert noticed a fresh book on the sitting-room table. It was 'Maunder's Treasury of Natural History.' One of the leaves was dog's-eared down, and it opened readily at that place. Running his eye idly down the page, Robert's attention was caught by the following heading:—

'Fulmar (*Procellaria glacialis*). A palmiped bird, belonging to the Petrel family.'

He read the article through, and then he called me from the breakfast-room.

'Look here,' he said, taking me to the table where the book lay open, and pointing to the article under heading 'Fulmar.'

The concluding sentences ran thus:—'Pennant, speaking of those' (that is, those fulmars) 'which inhabit the Isle of St. Kilda, says: "No bird is of such use to the islanders as this: the fulmar supplies them with oil for their lamps, down for their beds, a delicacy for their tables, a balm for their wounds, and a medicine for their distempers." The female is said to lay one white and very brittle egg, which she hatches about the middle of June.'

There was a very curious pause as we looked at each other after reading the article.

'Blame me,' observed Robert, 'if it wasn't a bird! We'd got the name pretty right, too, all but a letter or two; but how the dickens were we going to know it was a bird?'

I was silent.

'It seems to me,' he went on plaintively, 'a kind of breach of confidence of the fulmar, it's being a bird.'

'They say its egg's brittle,' I said vaguely, not seeking to excuse it, but because no other remark occurred to me.

Robert took no notice of the observation, but turned back to the flyleaf of the book, where he found the name of Mr. Flegg. He pointed to the name with his forefinger, and then he said: 'Did you ever read a poem of Bret Harte's—"The Heathen Chinese"?''

'Yes, I have. Why?' I said, thinking the question rather irrelevant.

'Why, it strikes me that Bret Harte studied Ah Sin from Mr. Flegg;' and he shut up the book with a bang, and we went, with much impaired appetites, to breakfast.

The next day the book was gone. Mr. Flegg had probably taken it to his bedroom. Nor did he ever again allude to the island of St. Kilda and to that creation of a splendid fancy, the founmart, save to thank Robert, with his usual courtesy, when he returned the manuscript.

HORACE HUTCHINSON.

At the Sign of the Ship.

THERE is no novelist, after all, like M. Xavier de Montépin. In France he addresses, in the *Petit Journal*, the largest of all audiences, though, when published in books, his works are not so popular as those of subtler authors. For this excellent and admirable writer is not subtle, nor reflective, nor analytic, nor theological. He knows exactly what his public wants, and it would be curious and interesting to compare its tastes with those of the large English public which takes its novels in newspapers. In a recent article on newspaper novels, Mr. Westall describes the most popular of English romancers, Mr. David Pae. A story of his, about a mill-girl, was published with applause in a Glasgow journal, whose subscribers demanded that it should be repeated in its columns again and again. There could not be a more perfect and gratifying success. The young heroine of Mr. Pae's imaginations was 'kept out of her own' by villains, who possessed sumptuous subterranean palaces and torture-chambers in her 'own romantic town,' Glasgow. Now, this appears to be one essential feature in a really popular tale, namely, that there should be an *ingénue* as pure as poor, who is debarred by conspiracies from the enjoyment of a prodigious fortune. M. Xavier de Montépin usually provides this central and overmastering interest for the readers of the *Petit Journal*. He adds the latest things in scientific murder, and the only fault one has to find with him is that his murderers are a little too indelicate in their slaughter. Thackeray well observes that, in the *Waverley* novels, a vast deal of killing is done without causing any pain to the most sensitive reader. M. Xavier is not so gently successful in *Le Testament Rouge*, otherwise a delightful and instructive romance.

* * *

M. de Montépin is always on the side of Virtue; no mortals were ever so passionately pure as his young lass and lover. Nor

did any ever fall in love with such vigour and earnestness at first sight, except Medea when she saw Jason, in Apollonius Rhodius. By the way, though it is a digression, what an extraordinary and original writer Apollonius was in his love-scenes. He appears to have invented the love story, and written at once the best and most passionate that ever has been furnished to the circulating libraries. His Greek is not easy, for, living in a late and literary age, he imitates Homer, and adds many odd affectations of a fashionable style. But when he comes to his great love-scene he leaves his imitator, Virgil, far behind him, and is not even excelled by Shakspeare in *Romeo and Juliet*. Yet Apollonius was probably the inventor of this chapter in romance. There is nothing like it in Homer, of course, and the love of Phædra, in the *Hippolytus*, is far from being 'the maiden passion for a maid.' Apollonius has been little read in England, but this excursion has been made for no other purpose than to recommend the new prose translation, by Mr. E. P. Coleridge, of *Oriel*, published by Messrs. Bell and Sons. Here is an extraordinary advance in style and readableness on the old 'cribs' to poetry in Bohn's Library of Classical Authors. There is a good deal in Apollonius to skip, but the third book, with the falling in love of the passionate daughter of Æetes, will be skipped by nobody who begins it, and may with profit be studied by either novelists or novel-readers.

* *

It is a long way from the banks of Phasis to the banks of Marne, but human nature was the same on both. The milliner who weeps over the lives of Paul and Martha in *Le Testament Rouge*, is at one with the lady of Alexandria or Syracuse who cried over the first edition of Apollonius Rhodius. However, in other respects, setting young love aside, M. Xavier de Montépin is modern, is of to-day. What a noble plot, to be sure, he has invented, a plot that might last him through far more than his stint of six poor volumes. And, with all his enthusiasm for virtue, what an extraordinary crime does he make his most virtuous character commit!

* *

You are to know that the Comte de Thonnerieux was a widowed and childless nobleman, of vast wealth and benevolence. His wife dead, his daughter dead, he spends his great fortune in the interests of the race. But his method of bequeathing it is not only odd, but wrong, though the full horror of the deed has

not struck the author. The Count makes a will, dividing his fortune into his known and his hidden assets. The acknowledged wealth he leaves to hospitals, night refuges, to make public parks, and so on. But the unknown wealth he has hidden beneath the seventeenth flagstone in the pavement of a certain chapel. It is about 200,000*l.*, and is to be given to the six children who were born in his quarter of Paris on the same day as his daughter. Each child gets a large gold medal, inscribed with three words, and the medals, when all brought together, declare the secret of the hiding-place. They are to be presented on the Count's death, or when the legatees come of age. This is all very well, but the Count leaves another indication of his secret, and here comes in his crime. He goes to the Bibliothèque Nationale, asks for the first edition of a rare political tract, *Le Testament Rouge* (Amsterdam, 1674). He underlines, in red ink, letters and words on pp. 22-24, which reveal his secret, and he goes away, stained with the inexcusable misdeed of marking and spoiling a work in a national library! Then he makes his will, directing his lawyer to go to the 'Bib. Nat.,' read the underlined words in *Le Testament Rouge*, and unbury the specie. Then he dies—unconfessed!

* * *

Two villains (*chenapans de la pire espèce*) steal the will, and of course hurry to the Bibliothèque Nationale. They ask for *Le Testament Rouge*; it is brought; but there are no words underlined in red! The copy is of the wrong edition. They ask for the true edition. It is not to be found. It has been stolen from the library, with other rare and valuable books. The police are on the track, and finally discover the thieves, who succeed by using sham tickets, like those which readers get in the British Museum—but in our Museum, I think, the arrangements would not permit the trick to be played more than once. However, *Le Testament Rouge* is gone, the villains find the bookseller in whose hands it is, take him into the country, and murder him in, I fear it must be said, circumstances of anything but good taste. Next day they visit his shop; it is occupied by the police, and the *Testament* is lost to them again. Any other villains would have waited till it is returned to the Bibliothèque Nationale, but this pair of scoundrels prefer to kill all the owners of the medals, rich and poor, man and woman, and discover the secret by comparing the inscriptions. Does this not a little lack probability? In any case, the hunt for the medals is sure to be exciting. But the

philosophic interest lies in seeing what kind of novel really pleases the widest public, the public of French newspapers. Clearly what they wish for is the triumph of immaculate virtue over the machinations of crime, in the search for enormous amounts of ready money. But the bibliophile, too, is interested in this fiction, and one only hopes that he will not be so destitute of true delicacy as to employ the dodge for robbing the public libraries.

* * *

A good deal of poetry has lately accumulated in the stores of this barque, and may now, perhaps, be unladen.

The following piece is acceptable for love of its always delightful topic, that great Dickens' Gallery, hung with the portraits of old and valued friends.

THE 'DICKENS' GALLERY.

Within the town of Weissnichtwo

This famous building stands,

And there the picture-lovers go

From all adjacent lands;

And once I also chanced to stray,

Among the rest, to see

This Exhibition of the day,

The Dickens' Gallery.

And first the face of little Nell

Smiled on me from the wall,

And many a maiden-form as well

Around the spacious hall.

There little Dorrit's weary face

Recalled the Marshalsea;

And child-wife Dora filled with grace

The Dickens' Gallery.

Sweet Dolly Varden stood beside

The Pecksniff sisters twain,

And little Dot and Florence vied

With Kate and Madelaine:

And Sairey Gamp the next I found

With Betsy Prig at tea,

And spreading scandal all around

The Dickens' Gallery.

AT THE SIGN OF THE SHIP.

And opposite a motley crew,
 Smikey, Toots, and Marley's ghost,
 Micawber, Squeers, and Pickwick too,
 And others, quite a host.
 And Captain Cattle, walking out,
 With thoughtful face, we see,
 Engaged in 'making notes' about
 The Dickens' Gallery.

And fraternising in a row
 Sit Weg and Carrier John,
 And Scrooge, and Trotty Veek, and Jo,
 No longer 'moving on':
 And Barkis, 'willin', waitin'' still
 Upon the wall, we see,
 And many more whose portraits fill
 The Dickens' Gallery.

And last, within a tarnished frame,
 A face well-known to me,
 And, written underneath the name,
 'I spells it with a we.'
 Then homeward wended I my way,
 Across the Northern Sea,
 In hope to find, some other day,
 The Dickens' Gallery.

M. J. FARRAH.

Here is a fresh example of a real English folk tale, of which we have so few.

'COAT O' CLAY.'

Once on a time, in the parts of Lindsey, there lived a wise woman. Some said she was a witch, but they said it in a whisper, lest she should overhear and do them a mischief, and truly it was not a thing one could be sure of, for she was never known to hurt any one, which, if she were a witch, she would have been sure to do. But she could tell you what your sickness was, and how to cure it with herbs, and she could mix rare possets that would drive the pain out of you in a twinkling; and she could advise you what to do if your cows were ill, or if you'd got into trouble, and tell the maids whether their sweethearts were likely to be faithful.

But she was ill-pleased if folks questioned her too much or

too long, and she sore misliked fools. A many came to her asking foolish things, as was their nature, and to them she never gave counsel, at least of a kind that could aid them much.

Well, one day, as she sat at her door paring potatoes, over the stile and up the path came a tall lad with a long nose and goggle eyes and his hands in his pockets.

'That's a fool, if ever was one, and a fool's luck in his face,' said the wise woman to herself with a nod of her head, and threw a potato skin over her left shoulder to keep off ill-chance.

'Good day, missis,' said the fool. 'I be come to see thee.'

'So tha' be,' said the wise woman; 'I see that. How's all in thy folk th' year?'

'Oh, fairly,' answered he. 'But they say I be a fool.'

'Ay, so tha' be,' nodded she, and threw away a bad potato. 'I see that too. But what wouldst o' me? I keep no brains for sale.'

'Well, see now. Mother says I'll ne'er be wiser all my born days; but folk tell as thou canst do everything. Can't thee learn me a bit, so they'll think me a clever fellow at home?'

'Hout-tout!' said the wise woman; 'thou'rt a bigger fool than I thought. Nay, I can't learn thee nought, lad; but I can tell thee summat. Thou'lt be a fool all thy days till thou get'st a coat o' clay; and then thou'lt know more'n me.'

'Hi, missis; what sort of a coat's that?' said he.

'That's none o' my business,' answered she. 'Thou'st got to find out that.'

And she took up her potatoes and went into her house.

The fool took off his cap and scratched his head.

'It's a queer kind of a coat to look for, sure-ly,' said he. 'I never heard on a coat o' clay. But then I be a fool, that's true.'

So he walked on till he came to the drain near by, with just a pickle of watter and a foot of mud in it.

'Here's muck,' said the fool much pleased, and he got in and rolled in it and came out spluttering. 'Hi yi,' said he—for he had his mouth full—'I've got a coat o' clay now to be sure. I'll go home and tell my mother I'm a wise man and not a fool any longer.' And he went on home.

Presently he came to a cottage with a ramping lass at the door.

'Morning, fool,' said she, 'hast been ducked in the horse-pond?'

'Fool yourself,' said he, 'the wise woman says I'll know more'n she when I get a coat o' clay, and here it is. Shall I marry thee, lass?'

'Ay,' said she, for she thought she'd like a fool for a husband, 'when shall it be?'

'I'll come and fetch thee when I've told my mother,' said the fool, and he gave her his lucky penny and went on.

When he got home his mother was on the doorstep.

'Mother, I've got a coat o' clay,' said he.

'Coat o' muck,' said she, 'an' what o' that?'

'Wise woman said I'd know more'n she when I got a coat o' clay,' said he, 'so I down in the drain an' got one, an' I'm not a fool any longer.'

'Very good,' said his mother, 'now thou canst get a wife.'

'Ay,' said he, 'I'm going to marry so-an'-so.'

'What!' said his mother, '*that* lass? No, an' that thou'lt not. She's nought but a brat, wi' ne'er a cow or a cabbage o' her own, an' bears a bad name into the bargain.'

'But I gave her my luck-penny,' said the fool.

'Then thou'rt a bigger fool than ever, for all thy coat o' clay!' said his mother, and banged the door in his face.

'Dang it!' said the fool, and scratched his head, 'that's not the right sort o' clay *sure-ly*.'

So back he went to the high road and sat down on the bank of the river close by, looking at the water which was cool and clear.

By-and-by he fell asleep, and before he knew what he was about—plump—he rolled off into the river with a splash, and scrambled out, dripping like a drowned rat.

'Dear, dear,' said he, 'I'd better go and get dry in the sun.' So up he went to the high road, and lay down in the dust, rolling about so that the sun should get at him all over.

Presently, when he sat up and looked down at himself, he found that the dust had caked into a sort of skin over his wet clothes till you could not see an inch of them they were so well covered. 'Hi, yi!' said he, 'here's a coat o' clay ready made, an' a fine one. See now, I'm a clever fellow this time *sure-ly*, for I've found what I wanted wi'out lookin' for it! Wow, but it's a fine feeling to be so smart!'

And he sat and scratched his head, and thought about his own cleverness.

But all of a sudden, round the corner came the squire on horseback, full gallop, as if the bogles after him; but the fool had to jump, even though the squire pulled his horse back on his haunches.

'What the dickins,' said the squire, 'do you mean by lying in the middle of the road like that?'

'Well, measter,' said the fool, 'I fell into the water and got wet, so I lay down in the road to get dry; an' I lay down a fool an' got up a wise man.'

'How's that?' said the squire?

So the fool told him about the wise woman and the coat o' clay.

'Ha, ha!' laughed the squire, 'whoever heard of a wise man lying in the middle of the high road to be ridden over. Lad, take my word for it, you're a bigger fool than ever'—and he rode on laughing.

'Dang it!' said the fool as he scratched his head. 'I've not got the right sort of coat yet, then.' And he choked and spluttered in the dust that the squire's horse had raised.

So on he went in a melancholy mood till he came to an inn, and the landlord standing at his door smoking.

'Well, fool,' said he, 'thou'rt fine an' mucky.'

'Ay,' said the fool, 'I be mucky outside an' dusty in, but it's not the right thing yet.'

And he told the landlord all about the wise woman and the coat o' clay.

'Hout-tout!' said the landlord with a wink. 'I know what's wrong. Thou'st got a skin o' muck outside an' all dry dust inside. Thou must moisten it, lad, wi' a good drink, an' then thou'lt ha' a real all-over coat o' clay.'

'Hi,' said the fool, 'that's a good word.'

So down he sat and began to drink. But it was wonderful how much liquor it took to moisten so much dust, and each time he got to the bottom of the glass he found he was still dry. At last he began to feel very merry and pleased with himself.

'Hi, yi!' said he. 'I've got a real coat o' clay now outside and in—what a difference it do make to be sure. I feel another man now—so smart!'

And he told the landlord he was certainly a wise man now, though he couldn't speak over-distinctly after drinking so much. So up he got, and thought he would go home and tell his mother she hadn't a fool for a son any more.

But just as he was trying to get through the inn door, which would scarcely keep still long enough for him to find it, up came the landlord and caught him by the sleeve.

'See here, master,' said he, 'thou hasn't paid thy score—where's my money?'

'Haven't any!' said the fool, and pulled out his pockets to show they were empty.

'What!' said the landlord, and swore; 'thou'st drunk all my liquor and ha'nt got nought to pay for it wi'!'

'Hi!' said the fool. 'You told me to drink so as to get a coat o' clay; but as I'm a wise man now I don't mind helping thee along in the world a bit, for though I'm a smart fellow I'm not too proud to my friends.'

'Wise man! smart fellow!!' said the landlord, 'an' help me along, wilt tha'! Dang it! thou'rt the biggest fool I iver seed, an' it's I'll help *thee* first—out o' this!'

And he kicked him out of the door into the road, and swore at him.

'Hum,' said the fool as he lay in the dust. 'I'm not so wise as I thought. I guess I'll go back to the wise woman and tell her there's a screw loose somewheres.'

So up he got and went along to her house, and found her sitting at the door.

'So thou'st come back,' said she, with a nod. 'What dost want wi' me now?'

So he sat down and told her how he'd tried to get a coat o' clay, but he wasn't any wiser for all of it.

'No,' said the wise woman, 'thou'rt a bigger fool than ever, my lad.'

'So they all say,' sighed the fool; 'but where can I get the right sort of coat o' clay, then, missis?'

'When thou'st done wi' this world, an' thy fo'ak put thee in the ground,' said the wise woman. 'That's the only coat o' clay as'll make such as *thee* wise, lad. Born a fool, die a fool, an' be a fool thy life long, an' that's the truth!'

And she went into the house and shut the door.

'Dang it!' said the fool. 'I must tell my mother she was right after all, an' that she'll niver ha' a wise man for a son!'

And he went off home.

M. C. B.

* * *

THE NIGHTINGALE'S CHILDREN.

Hark, a voice that cries and calls,
As the summer twilight falls;
Deep with longing, keen with pain,
Sobbing through the summer rain.

'Wake, wake, wake!
Ere my heavy heart doth break!'

'Tis the bird of silver tongue
Singing summer leaves among,
Calling on her children dead
With the wet leaves overhead :
In the living, leafy wood,
Calling on her silent brood,
Ever still and lifeless born
To the nightingale forlorn.

'Wake, wake, wake !
Waken ere my heart doth break !'

Nightingale of golden throat !
Sobbing forth thy silver note ;
Were it ours, thy charmed skill,
Might we raise our dead at will.
Is there ought we would not give ?
Would we leave, so they might live,
Aught unventured, aught unsaid,
Could they wake, the dreams born dead ?

GRAHAM R. TOMSON.

It is an antique superstition that the nightingale's children are born dead, and she sings them alive.

A. LANG.

The 'Donna.'

THE EDITOR of LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE begs to acknowledge the receipt of the following amounts. Contributions should be addressed to

The Editor of LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE,
39 Paternoster Row, London, E.C.

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The Editor requests that his correspondents will be good enough to write to him informing him of the subject of any article they wish to offer, before sending the MS. A stamped and addressed envelope should accompany the MS. if the writer wishes it to be returned in case of non-acceptance. The Editor can in no case hold himself responsible for accidental loss. All communications should be addressed to

*The Editor of LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE,
39 Paternoster Row, London, E.C.*

